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INDIAN PICTURES AND PROBLEMS



WARREN HASTINGS

(From a Painting by a contemporary native artist: in the possession of the Maharajah of Jaipur)

INDIAN PICTURES AND PROBLEMS

BY

IAN MALCOLM

WITH FIFTY ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO

THE MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE

FOR WHOSE BRILLIANT WORK AND EXAMPLE

I HAVE PROFOUND ADMIRATION

AND OF WHOSE UNVARYING KINDNESS

I CHERISH MOST GRATEFUL MEMORIES

THIS BOOK

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

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PART I

INDIA

I

EN ROUTE

A BOOK of travel sketches must begin somewhere; and, rather than attempt the dreary task of describing the long journey from London to Bombay in all its well-known detail, I prefer to choose mid-ocean for my first scene. Travellers may be divided into two categories—those whose chief interest lies in places, and those whose attention is fixed upon the manners and customs of people. The reader will not have a far journey before he discovers that I belong to the second of these classes. A voyage to India at the end of the leave season has, therefore, much to recommend it to those who think with me. For the others there is little interest beyond the Suez Canal and the rock of Aden, whereas *we* have the promenade deck and the smoking-room always with us. No journey that I have ever made surpasses in human interest the passage from Marseilles to Bombay at the beginning of the "cold weather," especially if it be undertaken in some vessel of lesser pretensions than a "P. and O." It matters little that, for the first day or two, one feels an utter stranger on board and to some extent lonely: that experience soon wears off in the sunshine,

and amongst men who, living in the East, are accustomed to greeting unfamiliar faces with a delightful show of warmth. One soon makes friends, and friends of no ordinary character—men of capacity, of determination, of courage, of culture. I never leave the ship without the impression, which deepens during every voyage East, that I have been in the company of men, all of them unconsciously charged with the making of history; and that upon the shoulders of each one rests the responsibility of guarding to some degree the British name and fame in the Orient. Each life has a different story to tell; of discipline kept by a single white man in a regiment of wild races on the Chindwin River; of justice dealt without fear or favour to thousands of natives in the plains of India, by a boy who took his degree but a couple of years ago; of huge districts irrigated and fertilised by the untiring exertions of one young Scot in the Public Works Department; of little Princes of India trained up in the paths of loyalty and manliness by the example of the "Political" appointed to guide them. Then there is a doctor returning after a course of study at the School of Tropical Medicine, to fight with increased skill and courage against the fevers of jungle and riverside; a couple of pilots whose lives belong to the Irrawaddy and the Bay of Bengal; a naval lieutenant, several Engineer and Artillery officers rejoining after furlough, and a crowd of planters reconciled to

the months of loneliness that face them by the few weeks of holiday that they have enjoyed in "the old country." There is not a fool nor a *fainéant* amongst them; every man of them is doing his country's work in some capacity, and is proud of his job. There is consequently no "buck" about these fellows; and it is only in the confidence of the smoking-room that one sometimes catches interesting side-lights upon characters and occupations of which the ordinary mortal knows little or nothing.

The dapper young officer, with a drawl and an eyeglass, who keeps his table in a roar of laughter, and is the centre of gaiety wherever he goes, is a most responsible person the moment he lands in Burma. He is a captain in the military police, and is responsible for a district larger than the whole of England. His force consists of some 2500 men, and upon its efficiency largely depend the peace and security of Lower Burma. All the year round he is inspecting one or other of his outposts, scattered over the country; getting to many of them by river, to some by bullock-waggon, to others by a combination of rail and road. Whenever a dacoit or other malefactor is caught within his area, he has to furnish a prisoner's guard; he must provide escorts for the Lieutenant-Governor as he tours about the province, or for lesser magnates whose duties lead them into desolate districts. If there is an *émeute* in the imported Chinese quarter of Rangoon,

he helps the civil authorities to suppress it; if there is a riot in a provincial gaol his troops are sent for to quell it. His men are drawn from every religion and every race; their prejudices have to be respected, and their superstitions humoured. He knows tribe dialects and native languages; and all his subordinates swear by this young fellow of twenty-eight or thirty, who "keeps his end up" whether he is patrolling the lonely hills committed to his charge, or shooting elephant or bison in the Kalewa district, or imitating Arthur Roberts in the smoking-room.

Next to him sits a coffee-planter from the hills of Southern India. He is a light-weight, and a well-known gentleman rider. As we steam down the Red Sea, under a sky that is crimson and gold and blue in the sunset, he points to the place where he was shipwrecked not so long ago on one of his many voyages to the East. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and the passengers had just turned in, when suddenly he found himself flung out of his bunk, and a roar as of thunder crashed through the ship. There had been a collision, and a hole as big as a hansom cab was stove in the port side forward. In a moment all hands were standing to the boats, and presently a melancholy procession of men and women filed up the companion-way, each carrying what they could within the prescribed limits of a bolster case. For hours they waited at their allotted boats, never knowing whether they might not suddenly be shipped off

and cast adrift upon the ocean. Great was their relief when the captain decided that he could go on; but after two days' struggling against the enormous leakage, his fresh-water tanks now filled with the sea, he was forced to turn his ship and head for Suakim. After about four days they made the port safely, and looked forward to something like comfort when they got ashore. Alas for anticipations: there was very little water and no ice there, so that they were glad when some friendly vessel carried them up the coast to Massowah. There the merry Italian had provided himself with bands and lights and cafés, and things looked bright once more. But the worst part of the experience was to follow in a small cargo boat, which volunteered (for a consideration) to take those who were in a hurry to be in India as far as Aden. In this boat there were no awnings, no fresh vegetables, no meat, no ice—fearful conditions under which to face the Red Sea at the beginning of June. "Scorched by the sun, parched by the hot brine in the air, sleepless by day and night, five days of tramping the ocean in a filthy cargo boat was an awful experience which none of us who were huddled on its decks will ever forget," said the coffee-planter, as he shook his fist at the fatal spot and dropped a huge lump of ice into his whisky and soda.

At another table there is a group of three, all Scotsmen. One is the manager of a big trading concern in Burma, another is connected with

the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company which did such splendid work during the Burmese war of 1886. The first of these was speaking of the difficulties of getting about certain parts of Burma during the rains, when the conditions of your business will not permit of procrastination until the roads have been made up and the floods in the rivers have run down. At these times riding is almost impossible, and boat-journeys are often perilous, but the day's work has to be done. He mentioned one occasion when he had to return to Rangoon from a place in the hilly district of Arakan, a village situated on a tributary of the Irrawaddy. It was impossible to ride, and there was nothing left for him but to take the only available boat, load it with himself, his clerk, his cook, and four strong Burmese oarsmen, and push out on to a rapidly rising river whose waters were already flowing like a cataract. They had only about four inches of freeboard, and the pace at which they raced downstream made a complete disaster appear inevitable. They could not make for the shore, for they would have been dashed to pieces ; so they had to content themselves with sitting still and hoping for the best. At last, about a hundred yards before reaching the point of confluence with the Irrawaddy, they saw a tremendous disturbance in the water, with spray rising from it to a great height, and they knew they were heading direct for a boiling whirlpool. Their only chance of salvation was to keep on the outside of the vortex, and this, by superhuman efforts on

the part of the four rowers, they were able to do. Three times they were swirled round at terrific speed, seeing many roofs of houses, a score of cattle, and a rhinoceros seething in the centre. That was the fate which awaited them, and how they escaped it they never knew; but ultimately a kind current extricated them from their peril, and onward they swept down the Irrawaddy to some hospitable sands upon which they ran the boat aground, and were safe once more.

His companion had an experience no less exciting when, by some accident, a vessel with a cargo of oil from Upper Burma was sunk in a narrow part of the Rangoon River. Diving operations had to be resorted to in order to see what were the chances of recovering the precious freight. But such is the nature of oil that it finds its way through all the joints and hinges of a diver's dress, and almost suffocates him with its gas; and two or three journeys down to the sunken ship were more than sufficient for the exhausted Burmese diver. But more remained to be done, and as the Burman could do no more, my friend put on a spare diving-suit, and prepared to risk his life for his Company. Over the side he went, with his electric light in his hand. He soon reached the deck of the vessel, and prepared to make an examination of its condition before going below. But being quite inexperienced in diving operations, he soon found his connecting tubes hitched round masts and stanchions to such an extent that,

although he received his supply of air with fair regularity, he could not communicate with the upper world, for his signal cord was tangled in the rigging and other ship's furniture. It was a serious predicament indeed; one felt its gravity when the narrator broke off his story rather abruptly, saying that he preferred neither to recall nor relate his sensations during the three hours which he spent under these fearful conditions at the bottom of the Rangoon River.

In the far corner of the room is an Artillery officer who was present at the executions which had to follow the murder of our representatives at Manipur, when fifteen thousand Manipuris stood round the little square of a thousand Indian troops, and no man could tell how that day might close. There, too, is an old "skipper" telling of the occasion when he lost his foothold stepping from his ship into his dinghy and fell into the Rangoon River. His wife sat terrified in the boat, his native rowers lost their heads, and he was left battling for life against the strong tides and undercurrents which prevail. Being a strong swimmer he held his own, and found breath enough also to curse his coolies in a mixture of Burmese and broad Doric. This was shocking to the soul of his lady wife, who managed, at this moment of real danger, to cry to him, "Dinna sweer the noo, John;" and subsequently had the gratification of seeing him rescued from the jaws of death. Their companion is a Scotch missionary, whose lines are

laid in fairly comfortable places, but who has on two occasions been chased by snakes; and once, as he was driving to church through the jungle with a careless globe-trotter, the latter flicked his whip into a mass that was hanging from a tree overhead. This was a vast swarm of bees, which immediately dispersed and fastened on the horse that the casual one was driving, stinging it with such fatal effect that within an hour it fell dead between the shafts.

Of sporting stories, naturally, we had no end; of shooting in Kashmir, of football on the frontier with the Pathans, of polo with Manipuris, of wild-beast hunting in the hills and jungles of Arakan. Of these last perhaps the most exciting came from quite a boy, who was spending a few days' leave in trying to get a buffalo. He got his shot and wounded a bull, which charged him. His head-man and other retainers shinned up the nearest tree until they were out of harm's way, and then shouted to him to lie flat on his back. He took their advice, and in this way escaped danger from the horns of the animal, which stood sentinel over him, and only succeeded in hurting him when it trod upon his foot. But he was helpless, because his cartridges were many feet above him with the Burmans. At last a great idea struck the chief shikari, who undid his long puggaree and dropped one end of it to the recumbent huntsman. The empty rifle was then tied to it, hauled up into the tree, loaded, and then successfully discharged at

the buffalo, which staggered a few yards and rolled over dead. The next day our undefeated sportsman went into the jungle again and killed a tiger, so he returned home perfectly happy.

It is, I think, the burden of responsibility given to young men at quite an early age in the East which develops and matures them so much sooner and better than their stay-at-home brothers. It broadens their sympathies, quickens their decision, and curbs their tempers. It teaches them to deal with men under vastly varying conditions, to get them out of "tight places," and to look nowhere else for salvation than to their own brain and muscle. The rulers of India, as has been finely said by Lord Curzon, are not the Viceroy, nor his Council, nor Judges, nor Provincial Governments: these can but direct the machine. The supreme engine of Government is the Indian Civil Service and the band of young Britons whose life work lies in that marvellous Empire. Each one of these has a duty to the King-Emperor, which he realises to the full, as one could tell from the faces and the more serious conversation in that smoking-room.

II

THE ART OF TRAVEL

MOST candid travellers will admit that, before starting for India for the first time, they were strangely in the dark as to the details which make for the comfort of the voyage, and that they landed in India totally unprovided with those conveniences which in Europe are counted luxuries, but which, in the East, are necessities to our well-being. Not that advice from friends is wanting; on the contrary it is abundantly supplied, but it is so contradictory that in the end we are not much the wiser. In the mere matter of clothes comes the initial difficulty; how much tropical clothing, how many winter dresses, and of what texture? Are we to pack up thin flannels or ducks, stout tweeds or furs? Upon this essential question doctors all differ, and the patient pilgrim fares forth into the "Land of Regrets" either encumbered with an amount of "impedimenta" suggesting a household removal, or lacking most of that which chiefly ministers to his comfort at home. Some day I trust that a classic may be written—"The Traveller's Vade Mecum"—for the East, setting forth the necessary contents of trunks, the cost of journeys, the proper and

improper charges at the hotels, and the effective management of servants. For the present let me summarise, as a result of personal experience, just a few of the ways in which one can be comfortable, or rather less uncomfortable, in those railway trains wherein so many of our days and nights are spent.

Railway travelling in India is pleasant or the reverse in direct ratio to the amount of forethought and preparation that the traveller has expended upon his journey. It is exceedingly cheap; that is the best part of it. And I justify that assertion with this convincing proof: that a ticket from Calcutta to Peshawar, all through Rajputana to Bombay and thence through Southern India, cost me under thirty-five pounds—a journey which occupied the best part of four months and carried me several thousand miles. But the pace is slow for the most part; and, as we know, it is the pace that kills. We seem to linger over the roughest places on the road, and to spend many weary half-hours in the dead of night at wayside stations, whilst the inhabitants indulge in language which, to our half-waking ears, sounds clamorous and redundant; whilst unattached engines snort and whistle as they promenade upon the vacant line beside us; whilst coolies, in their anxiety for exercise, career unchecked along the roofs of our compartments, dropping sheets of resounding iron above each sleeper's head. The carriages cannot be called clean by any stretch of the imagination,

for they are ingrained with the sand which has to pass for soil in this thirsty land; nor are they comfortable, since the seats are longitudinal with rectangular backs—and the human figure cannot rest at right angles. But they are spacious, with good washing accommodation, with ice-boxes in the floor, and every imaginable appliance for resisting the heat. Indeed these latter arrangements are so effective that, if one happens to be travelling in Northern India during a "cold snap," it takes all one's time to keep even moderately warm in the middle of the day.

Now, watch narrowly the habits of the old hand in India, and copy them as carefully as possible. We will assume that he is travelling with his wife. He will write to the station-master and reserve two *lower* berths in a compartment; this practically ensures that no stranger will come in until the journey's end, for the upper berths are miracles of discomfort. He will then pile into the carriage all the luggage that may be required for three or four days' travelling through varying climates; it is marvellous how many trunks and dressing-cases and hold-alls can be stored in an Indian first-class carriage. Room must also be found for the "tiffin-basket," filled with viands fresh and preserved (being ware of tinned provisions, which are far from safe in hot weather), a precaution that renders us independent of refreshment-room food, which, though cheap, is monotonously nasty. The ice-boxes will be

filled at the railway stations, where soda-water can generally be supplied, likewise whisky and butter and milk. Four other things are indispensable — one's own bedding, a tin basin for washing, a folding chair, which is the greatest comfort of all, and a travelling lamp without a glass chimney, by which one can read during the long nights of the cold weather months. Forewarned is forearmed; and thus supplied, I have found it easily possible, with the invaluable assistance of a good servant, to pass days and nights in these trains with a minimum of inconvenience and even a semblance of comfort.

This much, at any rate, may be said: that a railway carriage is, during the "cold weather," infinitely preferable as a dwelling-place to any of the ordinary hotels, which are usually crowded to overflowing and atrociously bad. One is apt to think, at first, that a fortune might easily be made by any company that would start half-a-dozen first-rate hotels in the chief cities of Northern India, with passable cooking and decent attendance. And the experiment has been tried by enterprising individuals, with excellent results to their own pockets, but with no lasting advantage to the long-suffering consumer. The capitalist disappears with a lakh of rupees to his credit, having sold his hotel to some second-class speculator, and the last state of those hotels is worse than the first. They slide into the possession of the native, who is careless alike of the cooking

and the comfort from a white man's point of view, with the result that we are unaware of any interest being taken in our existence until the day of our departure. Then, of a sudden, outside our bedroom door we see a serried rank of menials with hungry eyes. The "sweeper" with his broom; the bhisti with his water-skin; the room-boy with a duster; the gardener with a flower; three waiters and a gang of coolies—all are there salaaming to the ground and really interested at last! Woe, woe to the tourist who gives them backsheesh on the English scale of tips; bankruptcy will be his fate. Let him copy the resident in the country, who calls up the chief man amongst them, gives him five rupees for distribution and sends him away. The rest follow in hot haste, and the sahib is free once more. Such freedom, however, can never be the portion of the "globe-trotter," for the shadow of his personal attendant casts a general gloom over the bright ideal of unfettered liberty and pure enjoyment. The good travelling servant is, in truth, as difficult for the tourist to discover as he is precious when we have found him. In the generality of cases our "bearers" are our despair; their calling seems to be the last refuge of the undetected miscreant. When we inquire about a "travelling servant" nobody will guarantee him; when we examine him ourselves, he produces a bundle of beautiful certificates of good character from past masters, the which I am assured he has hired for the day for

a few pice, or has had copied by a friend for about eight annas. What I have suffered in the course of a few months in India from these "bearers"! I took one from Ceylon to Burma at the outrageous wage of forty-five rupees a month. When we got there he was useless, and I told him so; so he contracted a curious kind of fever and begged to be sent back to Colombo. My second servant received the same exorbitant remuneration, and demanded a month's wages in advance for his wife and children, as well as money to buy a thick outfit to wear with me in Darjeeling. When we reached the mountains he was wrapped in an old blanket to keep warm; he had spent my allowance in whisky, and so it went on until I finally gave him in charge of the police at Benares for peculation on a princely scale. My third effort was similarly unsuccessful, with a so-called soldier-servant, who, after spending one day with me at Lucknow, demanded some money in advance and then disappeared—wiring me from Delhi the next morning, "Very sick, not coming back." The truth is that we are helpless creatures in the net of these harpies; not one of them is worth twenty rupees a month, and we should do better to bring out our own fastidious maids and valets from England (if we cannot get a native servant direct from a personal friend who can recommend him), although European servants are very difficult to cater for in the East. But when our journey is over and we are once more at

home, we find that we have forgiven the servants and hotels and railways a great deal on account of the strange places and the many wonderful sights which, in spite of them, we have been enabled to see during a short holiday from home.

Friends continually ask one, "What has struck you most since you have been in India?" and I am invariably hard put to it for a reply. Comparisons here are not only odious, they are impossible. "We cannot compare a pat of butter to five o'clock;" nor can I appraise the lonely perfection of the Taj Mahal against the rugged majesty of the Khyber Pass, or pit the indelible impression of Lucknow against the oriental splendour of court life in a Native State. Yet I think that, perhaps, the tourist finds something newer in the life of Central India or Rajputana than elsewhere in this splendid Empire. In Florence or in Constantinople he may see beauties comparable to the buildings of India; in the Rockies or the Andes he will have known scenery comparable to the Himalayas and the Hindu Kush; but at Gwalior or in Jaipur (I mention these two States as typical) he will find communities, customs, and costumes which will fascinate him not only by their intrinsic interest, but also by their utter difference from anything that he may have experienced elsewhere. The States which I have just named are, as every one knows, the chief States respectively of the Mahrattas and the Rajputs; their rulers are two of the wealthiest and

most powerful Princes of India. The Maharajah Scindia of Gwalior represents the younger generation; the ruler of Jaipur is one of the few remaining examples of the passing type. At Gwalior one sees on every hand evidences of progress in a Western direction, most of it due to the personal energy and enthusiasm of its Prince. There is a splendid palace built on modern lines and laid in the centre of magnificent gardens. A light railway brings one's luggage from the station to the new guest-house which Scindia has just completed for his friends, and the same system of communication networks a large portion of his territory. There is also a first-rate club just outside the palace grounds, a thoroughly modern hospital, a military academy, and I know not how many other signs of marching with the times. But close at hand is the elephant-stable, where forty or fifty fine elephants are kept for daily work or processional use; there is a vast quadrangle for the horses of every breed, chargers, polo-ponies, hunters, hacks, and the rest; there is a huge sanded arena, surrounded with high walls, wherein the Maharajah is for the present keeping some lions from Somaliland with a view to turning them out hereafter into the jungles of Gwalior, to add to the sporting attractions of a sporting State. The city of Gwalior is modern; fine streets, whitewash, and good drainage are its main characteristics. Yet how fascinating is a walk down the Bankers' street towards evening, when



H.H. THE MAHARAJAH OF GWALIOR

the broad boulevard is bathed in the setting sunlight, which kindles all the red and yellow draperies of the men and women into the semblance of a stream of liquid fire that ebbs and flows, and by its alchemy turns the masses of silver ornaments, heaped along the pavement, into diamonds that glisten on the banks of this river of light. There is also a wondrous treasure-house which can occasionally be visited, and which contains all the priceless jewels of the Scindia family —emeralds, pearls, diamonds, and rubies of enormous size and fabulous worth—barbaric splendours which once adorned the robes of maharajahs, but for which the present ruler has little taste. He cares more for scientific and sporting pursuits, with the uppermost ambition to have his arm strong enough, when called upon, to strike for the King-Emperor; and although he can drive a locomotive and a motor-car like a professional, or shoot big game with the best shots in the world, his heart is set on the perfecting of his Imperial Service Troops, and he yearns for an opportunity of repeating his offer to give personal service for the Empire as he did during the expedition to Pekin. Gwalior is an arena where the East and West are striving for the mastery, and the West is winning.

The Maharajah of Jaipur belongs to the old régime; he is a much older man. His palace lies in the centre of his coral city, like a town within a town. It is the home of his ancestors and the pride of his heart. Enclosed within its walls are

his courts of justice, halls of audience, libraries, armouries, and stables. All through the day stalwart Rajputs of noble bearing are riding beneath the massive gateways to the particular quadrangle in which their business lies. Arrived there, they dismount their heavily caparisoned horses, give a twist to their moustaches and a hitch to their jewelled swords, then march away in a poetry of motion down a rainbow path of brilliantly attired retainers. Alone in his palace sits the Maharajah, generally upon a terrace overlooking the garden. He is a dignified, grey-bearded old gentleman, with a boundless goodness of heart for all that concerns the welfare of the Empire and of his State. But he is not approachable like the younger stock; he cannot mix in the sports and pastimes of his nobles, nor does he enter very directly into the administration of his dominion. But he is properly jealous of his power, and has a mediæval suspicion of possible rivalry; he has an ear, like the princes of olden time, for everything that is going on within his gates. When things fare well he gives thanks to Heaven, like the pious Hindu he is; when his people are in misery, he opens his bottomless purse to them and scatters money with a lavish hand, as much from a sense of duty as from a great-hearted desire to show bounty and the generosity of a free will. Jaipur is no modern city, but its streets are spacious and well paved throughout. Its dwelling-houses are all washed with a rosy pink,

adorned with quaint frescoes of native design, fretted stone work, grotesque carvings and ornamental balconies. It is a symphony in coral, which the superficial critic may compare, if he will, to the transformation scene of a pantomime or a wedding-cake in a confectioner's window; but he forgets that there is only one Jaipur, and that it is inhabited by a population whose daily raiment is no more theatrical (except to the drab mind of Grub Street) than the bright surroundings which so perfectly harmonise with it, and whose radiant tint it possibly suggested. Imagine crowds of Rajput gentlemen, merchants, and retainers dressed from top to toe in bright colours of velvet, cloth, or cotton, each with a curved sword at his side and a cloak upon his arm; picture to yourself gay knots of women at the street corners or upon the house-tops, flashing a shimmer of colour from their diaphanous draperies of blue and gold or black and silver; think of the roadway occupied by elephants with painted heads and scarlet howdahs, camels with purple saddle-bags and turbaned riders, white oxen drawing carts of every colour, pigeons circling in the air, peacocks preening themselves in the sunshine upon the city walls! Could these be more aptly framed in the khaki setting of mud walls so common throughout India, or in the plastered and stuccoed streets which denote industrial prosperity and an "up-to-date" municipality to the average mind? No, indeed no: whitewash the Pyramids if you will, cleanse Benares of its

filth and Calcutta of its noisome chimneys, but stay the hand of "civilisation" at Jaipur, and let Rajputs revel in the birthright of colour which is their heritage.

The contrast which I have indicated between man and man, between one town and another, is ever recurring through these Native States. It is not for us outsiders to say which is preferable, but rather to thank Heaven that both are good, and to believe that under British supervision there is room for both.

III

THE VICEREGAL POSITION

It is almost a truism to record the fact that India seems to be participating to the full in the desire for change, and, as some might say, progress, which is nowadays so distinguishing a feature in the social and political life of the Asiatic nations. The Home Government has certainly fostered this by its attitude and methods during the fierce controversy between the late Viceroy and his Commander-in-Chief; for it has lent the sanction of its authority and example to the idea that the Viceroy and his Council are no longer to be the supremely responsible arbiters and administrators of the fate of the Indian Empire, but rather the instruments by which the behests, or it may be the caprices, of a transient party leader installed at the India Office may be effectively carried out. The "old order" is therefore in the melting-pot. We have seen the supremacy of the civil authority seriously challenged by an eminent soldier of limited Indian experience; we have noted, all through the agitation concerning the partition of Bengal, that the seed of wider education is bearing its first-fruits of premature self-confidence in the breasts of certain sections of natives, who do not

hesitate to influence the public mind against British rule, which alone has prevented the absorption of Bengal by the more strenuous races of India; we have observed with deep concern that the liberty of language hitherto accorded to the vernacular press seems menaced by an overgrowth of license, which must surely be eradicated by a ruthless hand, or liberty will die. A new spirit is abroad in the land, born of partial instruction in democratic principles as carried out in the West, and of a first contact with British advisers of a younger generation schooled in the ways of democratic thought. Such a spirit does not hesitate to face the problem of immediate self-government, entirely oblivious though it be of Eastern tradition and of the disastrous history of perpetual warfare which preceded the advent of British rule in India. It argues, and the argument has taken root more especially in the brains of a certain type of Bengali politician and pamphleteer, that the Viceroy is no longer the apostolic successor of the great Emperors of Delhi, the inaccessible omnipotent maker and breaker of men. He is discovered to be a creature of flesh and blood, who must step down into the arena when challenged or thwarted, and fight through the dust and the heat to vindicate the course of action which he has seen fit to take; he must explain to the ignorant, convince the opponent, argue and wrestle with all comers, face censure alike from friend and foe. Another complexion

is given now-a-days to the great Proconsul from over the sea. The educated persons of Bengal, whose ambitions oscillate between Government posts and seats in Congress, no longer admit him to be the almighty vicegerent of a beneficent King-Emperor, the sage counsellor in whom are reposed by proxy all the attributes and powers of the Emperor himself so long as the Dependency is wisely and securely governed. He is now but a public "servant," to be supervised by a superior in England who is not the King, but only the temporary occupant of an office to which he has been called by the voice of "the man in the street," who has elected a certain party to power. "Look," says the travelled Bengali, "at the average Englishman who thus becomes the arbiter of our destinies; are we not as competent as he to be the captains of our fate?" and the Bengali audience answers, "Yes; let us combine on the platform and in the press to boycott English manufactures, to undermine British rule, and to shape the destinies of India for ourselves."

I am far from saying that the foregoing *aperçu* of the Viceregal position is shared to any extent by the races of India other than the Bengali Hindu. On the contrary, my firm impression is that the idea of a benevolent despot is an entirely sympathetic one to the native, especially in Native States; the delays and intrigues inherent in such self-government as already exists, do not invite him to agitate at present for an extension of these

privileges; but the blessings of peace under the British autocrat, as the native knows him, compare very favourably with the turbulent conditions of existence under the Asiatic potentates in India, of whom he learnt when at school. And I will go further and assert that in many a Native State, during the partition agitation in Bengal, I heard men of all classes asking whether the Government in England was aware of the sedition that was being talked and written in that province, and of the disloyalty that was being openly preached. "We cannot understand it," they said, "and if the country belonged to us we should know how to deal with it; it would not take us long." The Rajput and the Mahratta and the Sikh know their Bengali Babu by heart. They feel, moreover, that if the same methods of agitation were adopted in Native States, or in other provinces further removed from Calcutta, the treatment meted out to offenders would be exemplary, and their shrift short indeed. Yet in these loyal communities there is also change to be noted, as significant in its way as the altered attitude towards the supreme Government which I have mentioned. In this case it concerns the Indian civilians who leave home as young men to administer vast tracts of territory in the name of the *Sirkar*. The work that they do is of the very best—clean, courageous, yet at times disheartening, for they no longer feel that they have a free hand to do the best for the districts assigned to them.



H.H. SIR PERTAB SINGH

MAHARAJAH OF IDAR

Time was when the Settlement Officer (let us say) was more than father or mother to the district under his control. His word was law, and sacred law at that. There was no ill-will borne to him by the unsuccessful plaintiff in a suit which had been decided by him, for it was known that the verdict had been given by an upright judge. In those days, guided by the same immutable sense of justice as to-day, he could remit revenue or reduce assessments in lean years to enable the poor cultivator to make both ends meet, and his reward was the lifelong gratitude and faithful service of the agricultural classes. Such service the older civil servant accepted as of right, knowing that it testified to a peaceable and contented population. But the younger man feels bound to point out that his judgments and concessions are prompted by his sense of duty, that personal bounty of heart is out of the question; and when the recipient perceives that his easement flows from obedience to a conscience or a circular, and not from the generous emotion of a sympathetic heart, then his gratitude flies out of the window, and appeals lie piled before the doors of superior courts. I confess that all my sympathy goes out to these civil servants in the discharge of their duties, rendered so difficult in these days of civilisation, red-tape, and consequent fear lest the exercise of initiative, however judicious, may be condemned as an exhibition of usurped authority.

I cannot close this chapter without some

reference to a further change in the delegation of supreme authority which is occasionally discussed in India, and which was a constant topic of conversation during the Prince of Wales' recent tour. We at home are scarcely qualified to offer an opinion on the advantages or drawbacks of sending a Viceroy of the Blood Royal to take the place of the nominee of the party in power, for we cannot quite make up our minds as to how the change would work in the far more familiar case of Ireland. The arguments, with certain necessary permutations, are however the same, and may be shortly stated. That it would be an excellent thing, now that India has settled down to British rule, to have a Royal Viceroy whose personal affinity to the Throne will prove the living interest taken by the King-Emperor in his vast Dependency; that the presence of a prince of the reigning House upon the throne in India would do more to convince Oriental races of the over-lordship of Britain than a legion of soldiers or a perpetual succession of viceregal tours; that he would be welcomed equally by ryot and rajah as he progressed, like the Emperors of old, in stately pageant from end to end of the dominion committed to his care; that his occupation of the seat of authority would secure to the post of Viceroy the dignity and importance of which agitators are now trying to deprive that office.

It may be said, I think, that these arguments are generally advanced in Anglo-Indian com-

munities, and are viewed without disfavour in Bengal amongst the moderate section of opinion. But I have certainly come to the conclusion that, throughout India as a whole, native opinion is either indifferent or else openly hostile to the proposition. The opinion of one veteran statesman in a Native State was so interesting that I shall transcribe it, with the remark that it seems to sum up native feeling on the subject with great accuracy.

"Such a change is not possible nor suitable for India at the present time. If ever it could have been introduced, it would have been done directly after the great Mutiny of 1858, when the title of Viceroy was added to that of Governor-General of India. It must be remembered that Asia, by tradition immemorial, attaches to the style and title of a king the unlimited power of doing good or evil. A Persian poet sings:

> 'The King should have both favour and wrath,
> There should run two rivers from his sleeve:
> One, the water of the Fountain of Life,
> The other whose whirlpool is the circle of Death.'

We learn from our histories that in old days the Rajahs used to give daily the equivalent of their weight in silver as charity to the villages through which they passed, while some Princes measured their largesse in maunds of gold. We know that the Emperor Akbar's daily marches entailed fearful extravagances, as he passed on tour from town to town with his endless trains of animals,

his cohorts of soldiers, his transport, his retinue, his Ministers, and their thousands of followers,

"Now, if you intend to make a Royal Viceroy with the one object of impressing the minds of the people, your labour will be in vain unless you surround that august personality with similar extravagances and invest him with equally despotic power. Surely it is inconceivable that your Royal Viceroy will be able to give in charity a maund of gold per diem; that he will be permitted to deprive his subjects of life or property without the intervention of judge and jury, or to bestow lands as wide as English counties in backsheesh to those whom he delights to honour. Your Royal Viceroy will have no travelling retinue like Akbar, with his train of elephants caparisoned with gold and silver; his hundreds of horses gorgeous in brilliant trappings; his tigers, leopards, rams, lynxes, and buffaloes. He will have the name of Royalty without its power as accepted in the East; he will be an empty symbol and a confusion to millions of the inhabitants of India, who simply cannot understand the idea of a limited monarchy, of a king shorn of his despotism and external display.

"Your Prince Viceroy will also be a danger to you in India, if, like Lord Curzon, he is liable to defeat at the hands of his Commander-in-Chief; for to such a position we can attach no value at all. I repeat that in India our high respect to a king is not to his person, but it expresses our

worship of his unlimited power. Far better is it, therefore, to continue with your vicegerents from home than to exchange them for a prince of the Royal line, whom we should clothe in imagination with inexhaustible might, but whom we should find, in fact, to be denuded of all but limited constitutional powers."

I have transcribed this interesting statement in full because it expresses, more clearly than any European paraphrase could do, the native position, a mixture of reason and sentiment, on the matter. And, so long as Indian opinion is left alone, it may be guaranteed to cling to the wonderful system of rule which has attached to the British Crown the allegiance of three hundred millions of people, not dazzled by any glittering pageantry of despotism, nor gripped in the iron embrace of a military autocracy, but compelled by slow degrees into the participation and appreciation of the blessings that flow from the freedom which, somehow or another, surely follows in the wake of the British flag.

IV

THE KING OF THE DESERT

I SINCERELY believe that if, during a tour in India, one can become acquainted with the affairs and inhabitants of a single Native State, such a visit will teach him to care more about that wonderful Empire than the attendance at a score of lectures, or the perusal of a hundred books or articles could ever achieve. Most of us take India so very much for granted; we think of it almost as an abstract possession — very distant, very picturesque, and very contented. We read of its fearful famines, its terrible plagues, its devastating earthquakes, and our sorrow is a sort of impersonal emotion. When we hear of its pageants, its prosperity, and its loyal princes, our gladness is of that impersonal kind which is akin to actual indifference. But personal acquaintance soon changes all this; and the study of one famine camp or one plague-ridden district, or the friendship of a few native gentlemen opens the door to wide fields of abiding interest, co-extensive with life itself. In the following pages I propose to give a sketch of one of the rising Chiefs of Rajputana, Sir Ganga Singh, Maharajah of Bikanir, to show the manner

of man upon whom the British Government must ultimately depend for loyal support.

The story of his family and the kingdom which it carved out of the immense desert of Marwar ("the abode of death") is as familiar to every boy in Rajputana as is the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus to the school children of the West. It is full of courage and romance and adventure; of wars to win and of incessant struggles to hold this second State which the family of Rao Siaji had founded. But perseverance and pluck eventually won the day, and this warrior clan of Rahtor Rajputs were triumphant in defeating all comers; standing almost alone in remaining unconquered by the Mahrattas. It was not, however, until 1818 that the State of Bikanir had any dealings with the Home Government, the year in which the British Envoy passed through this province on his way to Kabul and signed a lasting treaty with its enlightened Maharajah. From that day to this, the Government of India has found in Bikanir a staunch ally, from the Sikh wars and the Mutiny of long ago to the expeditions to China and Somaliland of only the other day. So much for the past history of this unique State in the desert.

When I first saw Bikanir I thought it was either a mirage or a miracle. We were travelling in a somewhat leisurely train over the rolling sandy waste, with no green thing in sight to repose the eye, no human being or live animal to quicken

the interest, when suddenly in the far, far distance —perhaps fifteen miles away—there came into view a noble pile whose whiteness shimmered in the morning light. Still closer we came, and now we could distinguish walls and towers and bastions; it seemed like an enchanted castle, a fairy king's palace set in a sea of gold. This was Bikanir, a little oasis in the cruel wilderness, a rose blossoming in the desert. This was the city which the ancestors of Ganga Singh founded five centuries ago, with countless miles of trackless waste between their enemies and themselves. In its fortress palace twenty Maharajahs have subsequently reigned, and my friend is the twenty-first in descent from Rao Bika, "the King of the Desert."

His portrait is, I think, his best introduction anywhere. Tall, soldierly, athletic; keen as a lance in work and play; talking English like a Briton, and writing it still better; a good host and a staunch friend—you would at once take Ganga Singh for the best type of an English public-school man, and in ten minutes you would stamp him with the highest seal of your approbation by classing him as "a prince of good fellows."

It is now eight years since the Maharajah got his full powers, at the early age of eighteen. He has been splendidly trained for his heavy responsibilities, and was peculiarly lucky in the Englishmen who surrounded him as a boy. He always speaks with especial affection of Mr. Bayley (now British



H.H. THE MAHARAJAH OF BIKANIR

Representative at Hyderabad), who looked after him as a small lad and laid the foundations of his Western education; and of Mr. Brian Egerton, who was with him as guardian from the time he left Mayo College until he became a ruler *de facto*. I need only quote a couple of lines from his "maiden speech" in 1896, delivered in proposing the health of His Excellency the Viceroy, to show the spirit in which he intended to approach his responsibilities:

"I stand before you as a boy with all my work and my trials before me; and it is my most earnest wish that I should prove myself worthy of the position in which I have been placed."

No sooner had Ganga Singh ascended the *gadi* than his full powers of concentration and initiative as a statesman were put to the test and brilliantly vindicated. In 1899–1900 the rains completely failed, and Bikanir suffered with the rest of India from that terrible famine which is now historic. Nothing daunted by his youth, His Highness set to work with characteristic energy and self-devotion; he organised his whole system of famine relief so well that the distress of his starving people was mitigated to a large extent, though the resources of his State were taxed to the uttermost. No mean achievement this for a boy of under twenty, to administer successfully 23,000 square miles of territory, carrying about one million of population, in the very darkest hour of its need!

Directly the famine was over he proceeded to

set his Government in order, and to relieve it of some of those taints of evil from which few Administrations in the East are wholly free. He reorganised and purified it until his officers, once notoriously corrupt, were as honest and single-minded as the Prince himself. His next venture was further afield, when he accompanied his own troops across the sea on the recent China Expedition, the first ruling Chief to fight for the Empire outside the Indian Empire. He did some first-rate work there, for he is an admirable soldier, was mentioned in despatches, and gained his first decoration, a K.C.I.E., as a reward for his services in the Far East. Soon after this he came to England for the Coronation festivities. His perfect mastery of the English language stood him in good stead throughout this visit, and brought him closer to his British fellow-subjects than any other prince except perhaps the Maharajah Scindia. Well might Lord Curzon say at the State banquet at Bikanir in November 1902:

"The personality and career of no ruling Chief in India have excited in me a warmer interest than those of His Highness, for he possesses such keen capabilities, such excellent chances, so splendid an opening. The four years that have passed since he received full powers have been packed full with industry and experience of many kinds and in many lands. Of all his many honours none was so well earned as the gold Kaiser-i-Hind medal for

his great personal activity in the sad famine of two years ago. He was his own Famine Officer throughout that fearful time, and conducted his campaign with indefatigable energy and skill."

That is the man in public life, as the Indian people know him—a character full of traits which in England we consider sympathetic and exemplary. But in private life he is a model of what a man should be, no matter under what skies he may chance to have been born. In his own home he is, as I have already said, a perfect host. Happily married some years ago, he has two delightful little children, and it is charming to see the affectionate relations which exist between them and their father. Then he is a sportsman of no ordinary skill, as one may judge by the innumerable trophies which decorate the rooms in his new home, Lal Garh (the Red Palace). Already he has killed thirty tigers, as well as bison, bear, and of course panthers innumerable; and with a gun he can hold his own with any first-class English shot.

Bikanir is a fine sporting territory, especially remarkable for the Imperial sand-grouse and the large herds of chinkara and black buck, which wander over the desert in great numbers. The grouse shooting is particularly good, and I shall always remember the shoot we had one morning as being quite unlike anything I had ever seen before. Upon one glorious afternoon we motored over the desert (the Prince at the wheel) to Gujner, his

country place about twenty miles from Bikanir city, a fascinating castle built on the edge of a beautiful lake. The following morning we were out early in a bullock-cart, and successfully stalked a couple of fine bucks, after which we proceeded to our butts below the castle walls on the far side of the lake. We were only two here, with one gun apiece; another gun was at a small pond some two miles away, and two others were stationed at pools five miles farther on. Precisely at 8.45 the birds began to arrive for their morning drink—first in scores then in hundreds. They fly very high and swoop at the shot, which makes it rather difficult to be sure of killing with the second barrel. For two hours exactly this wonderful sight continued—birds flocking in from every quarter of the compass, swooping, circling, disappearing, and then returning to the only water in the desert—and by eleven o'clock there was not one to be seen. In that time we managed to get about three hundred birds between us at the lake; the other guns had got a few, but their chief function was to keep the grouse from settling on the smaller ponds. It was very hot work, especially after ten o'clock, when the sun was high; and the subsequent bath and excellent breakfast seemed equally memorable events upon a memorable day. In the afternoon, before starting back for Bikanir, we went to see the wild boars fed from the castle wall. At three o'clock every day the head keeper utters an odd cry of invitation, which echoes curiously through



THE BIKANIR CAMEL CORPS

the apparently empty jungle. The cry is repeated again and again; peacocks fly down to the cleared space below, a few partridges assemble, and gradually from far and near boars and sows and squeakers trot in for their daily bread—good grain plentifully poured to them out of sacks.

I have kept until the last the feature of the visit which pleased me most. It was not his pride in that camel corps which did such excellent service in Somaliland, nor his absorbed interest in his public school for the sons of nobles, which will have far-reaching and wholesome effects upon future relations between the ruler and the chieftains under him—though both these institutions do him the utmost credit. What I most admired was the touching and perfect confidence which exists between the Maharajah and his people. It was very forcibly brought to my notice one afternoon when he drove me through the city. Nobody knew that he was going there; we did not know ourselves till a quarter of an hour before we started, and the first few streets were almost empty. But the news spread like wildfire; and then, for the space of an hour, the narrow streets were filled with people—men, women, and children—shouting themselves hoarse in his praise, and greeting him with demonstrations of personal affection which were quite unmistakable. "*Khuman andata!*" they cried as they salaamed—"Hail, Giver of Grain!" and the cry rang through the old-world city from end to end.

From the city we drove to the palace of his ancestors, the glorious building which I had seen from miles away, and we watched the sun set over the desert, with its foreground of railways and hospitals and telegraphs and electric plant, the work of his own initiation. As we stood upon its battlements we spoke of many things, and I confessed to the emotion which I had felt at seeing the extraordinary ovation he had just received in the city. Quietly he attributed it to what he had been able to do for the people during the great famine; and he added, "The famine relief works which I started in 1899 achieved something far more valuable and important than a mere increase of revenue to my State. They brought me and my people very close together."

V

THE PAGEANT OF THE SUN

A RAILWAY journey from Hyderabad (Sind) to Jaipur in Rajputana is only to be endured if one's philosophy and patience are superior to all the foibles of frail humanity: so, at its close, I confess that my flesh was weak. Through rolling deserts of yellow sand I had rocked for a day and a night; through regions where naught could thrive but the aggressive cactus, naught live but the wild camel roaming solitary and supercilious over the plain. Here and there a horseman; now and again a straw-built wigwam, surrounded by a thorn zareba to protect the inmates from the beasts of prey that roam abroad by night. Not that such quarry would have satisfied any ordinary beast; for emaciation by famine was the one feature common to all things human in that wilderness. Old men, tottering upon spindle shanks that could scarce support even their wizened frames, stood gazing at the train; women young and old, haggard and hollow-eyed, stooping beneath the miserable bundle of sticks which once they carried with swinging gait upon an upright head, held out their hands for alms; and, saddest of all, were the poor pinched little children, whose

naked brown skin seemed to be stretched over nothing but ribs and shin-bones which obtruded themselves with heartrending persistency upon the gaze. Such were the denizens of the desert, under a pitiless sun blazing out of a cloudless sky.

But, in the twinkling of an eye, and as if the land had been charmed by the touch of a fairy's wand, the scene changed! The broken rocks were transformed into mountains, castle-crowned; the wilderness blossomed like a garden, and the thirsty channels ran with living water. Beneath the shade of countless trees the cattle browsed in plenty, and in the green rice-fields the wise old paddy-bird stalked his way in peace. And, as I drew nearer, the atmosphere became rose-coloured; the sky lightened from sapphire to turquoise, and in the distance I saw the city of my childhood's dream. There was the great boundary wall looming beyond the trees, its straight line broken by turret and bastion and noble gateway; there the tall minaret piercing the sky; and there—rising in oriental splendour—the seven-storied palace of the Prince and the Temple of the Winds. And the colour of this distant vision was coral—soft as the pink heart of a sea-shell, tender as the blush of the first spring rose.

From afar I could hear the strange humming of Persian wheels, like the sound of children's voices in the distance, and the creak of the bullock-carts as they toiled along the dusty road. Closer I came, and noticed the gatherings at the

roadside wells; of women, close shrouded in blood-red draperies, through whose diaphanous folds glinted heavy silver ornaments upon neck and arm; and of stalwart white-clad men, girt about with shield and curved sword. Camel after camel passed me; gaily decked horses, and a couple of elephants with festive trappings upon their backs—all wending their way to the city of Jaipur.

"What means this sudden commotion," thought I—"this glad and gorgeous pilgrimage toward the city gates?" And I paused to make inquiry of a knot of peasants, who, with striped bundles upon their backs, plodded cheerfully along in my direction. With a striking obeisance, characteristic of the Rajput clans, and signifying no inferiority nor anything more humbling than deference to a stranger, one of their number replied: "We go, sahib, to the city; for to-morrow is the Sun Festival, the feast-day of the Rajputs, Sons of the Solar race. Even now, our Father the Sun has burst the iron bonds of winter, and waxes in power and majesty from day to day. Come with us, sahib, and we will show you the worship and adoration offered to our Life-giver, the Sun." So kindly were these words spoken, so friendly their spirit, that my will and my words went forth together in acceptance of so unsought an invitation. And thus it came about that, with a flock of tinkling goats and a sheep or two, I and my newly found friends passed together beneath the central gateway into the Fairy Land.

By this time it was evening, and the rays of the setting sun flooded the walls and houses of Jaipur with a light as of the ocean playing upon a coral reef, turning her white roads into marble and her buildings into *vieux rose* brocade. Never shall I forget that summer evening: the broad, white highway, flanked on either side by a raised pavement, beyond which rose the stately façade of coral-coloured stone, with its top line of fretted tracery and fair design stretching as far as eye could see. Beneath this sumptuous structure, and in its shade, sat merchants of every trade and dealers in every ware. All bathed in the generous evening sunshine, each colour of the rainbow danced and wantoned in the light; cottons and calicoes—red, mauve, and citron—silver turbans and golden shoes, green vegetables, brass and earthen vessels, garish toys and pictures—all combined to dazzle the eye as they lay exposed for sale to the silent-footed throng that jostled past. With such a foretaste of life within these walls, what wonder that I dreamt of the morrow, in fullest expectation that the promised festival would realise my earliest imaginings of the Middle Ages returned, and of Chivalry triumphant!

Nor had I long to wait; for, before the first glimmer of the dawn, Jaipur was all astir. From the crenellated walls peacocks gleamed like jewels; green parrots screamed as they flew from the house-tops to the trees; and a blue cloud of pigeons circled and settled in the city square.



H.H. THE MAHARAJAH OF JAIPUR

Soon the streets became a moving mass of colour; purple and red and yellow flowed like a living tide between coral banks. The great day had dawned, whereon the Sun-god was to be carried in procession from his dwelling-place, high upon the hill without the city, attended by his direct descendant the Maharajah of Jaipur, with all the dazzling court of Rajput noblemen and all the pomp and circumstance of state. To greet their divinity the people had assembled from near and far: even now some were arriving, travel-stained and footsore, from distant provinces of the land; whilst others jolted up the paved roadway in bullock-waggons, or lumbered into the capital on camel or on elephant. Soon every point of vantage was occupied; the flat roofs of the houses on the route shone with the varied draperies of the women, chattering and excited; the stone side-walks heaved with serried ranks of stalwart figures, many of them carrying little children astride upon their heads to see the passage of the god in his silver car. The main road was cleared by the red-coated soldiery, but not before vehicles of all descriptions, loaded with bright little green and spangled nautch-girls, or with soberly clad Western tourists, had been scattered to the side streets like chaff before this military wind.

A few minutes more and the procession would arrive. On their proud chargers late-comers clattered through the palace gate to join the gay cavalcade; policemen gesticulated, shouting franti-

cally; pariah dogs fought, and a loose Brahminy bull cantered headlong down the empty roadway. At last the salute of guns boomed out; the festival had begun, for the Maharajah had left the palace and the procession was close upon us. First came a mighty trotting elephant, his head all painted in the likeness of peacocks' eyes and butterflies' wings; across his brow hung a triangular piece of silver armour, and his back was covered with a rich scarlet cloth, which almost hid his legs from sight. He carried four naked figures, all thickly smeared with yellow ochre from top to toe. These were the palace dwarfs and fakirs, whose duty it was to remove or crush any obstacle that might threaten to block the royal road. Close behind them followed a row of ten more elephants, stretching right across the route, all similarly painted and gorgeously apparelled; each carried a different coloured saddle-cloth, a silver or a gold howdah, and a massive tiara of silver bound across his forehead. Then came the horse artillery, a noisy if not a very formidable section of the State defences, supplemented by an irregular camel corps in green and yellow tunics, armed to the teeth with sword and shield, and carrying long country-made guns, said to fire ball cartridge of prodigious size. Then the royal stud: at its head a dealer's brake, drawn by eight magnificent chestnuts, and behind it some forty chargers caparisoned in purple and silver and scarlet and gold, each led by a couple of old retainers from the

palace. The band followed—a strange assortment of wandering musicians armed with instruments of grotesque proportions and abnormal weight. They did not make much sound,—indeed there was nothing audible but the melancholy throbbing of the tom-tom; still, they made a brave show with their escort of standard-bearers, each bending under the burden of a banner which displayed the national five-coloured flag.

And now the excitement had reached its height; for, thus heralded by cavalry and music, and surrounded by a cloud of priests and followers waving pennants and fans and feathers, the god drew nigh, a silver image seated in a canopied silver shrine, which flashed in the flood of sunlight like a temple of burnished gold. Drawn by four snow-white oxen, with horns painted to match the green velvet of the car, the Giver of light and life to every Rajput wended his royal way amid the ecstatic salutations of the faithful. In the rear followed a rabble of foot soldiers in puce-coloured uniforms, carrying cross-bow or jezail, sword or dagger, powder-horn or quiver, each as his fancy dictated. More elephants, more camels, more attendants; another squadron of riding horses, smothered in velvets and feathers and armour; a brass band in red flannel; a company of green-coated infantry; and then—then the individual whose untiring efforts for his people well merit the magnificent ovation which he received.

In a high barouche, dressed in purple velvet

and resplendent with jewellery, clasping the huge sword of state between his hands, sits the Maharajah of Jaipur, the most impressive figure in this mediæval pageant. The troops present arms with a rattle; the crowd cheers, and the band of each battalion blares out "God save the King" as he passes down the street, gravely saluting the multitude on either hand. Here was the father of his people indeed! a ruler who, with boundless energy and a bottomless purse, has combated famine in a way which has endeared him beyond all expression to his faithful subjects. Blessed with great riches, the savings of a frugal sovereign during long years of fatness, he has poured them out like water to alleviate the sufferings and arrest the misery which the lean years since 1897 have brought with them. And, moreover, of his bounty, he has presented to the Government of India the princely sum of £200,000 to found the nucleus of a Famine Trust Fund, to be an emergency treasury against the evil days that the future may have in store. To this man, then, all honour was due, and it was abundantly paid as, with his bodyguard of Rajput noblemen—a blaze of colour—he closed the pageant of the Sun; for, in his person, the rays of life and of beneficence radiated upon the just and the unjust in a manner worthy of his divine origin and fresh in the memory of his grateful people. The air resounded with their cheers, and the vibration of their

blessings must have pierced the vault of heaven itself.

And then we parted, my companions and I. Together we had watched a ceremony instinct with beauty and rich with local significance; but now we went our several ways,—they, intent on reaching the deserted city of Amber by nightfall, in order to pay their vows before the shrine of Kali on the morrow; whilst I remained behind alone, to drink more deeply at this fascinating well of native life, and to bask a little longer in the beauty of the Coral City of Jaipur.

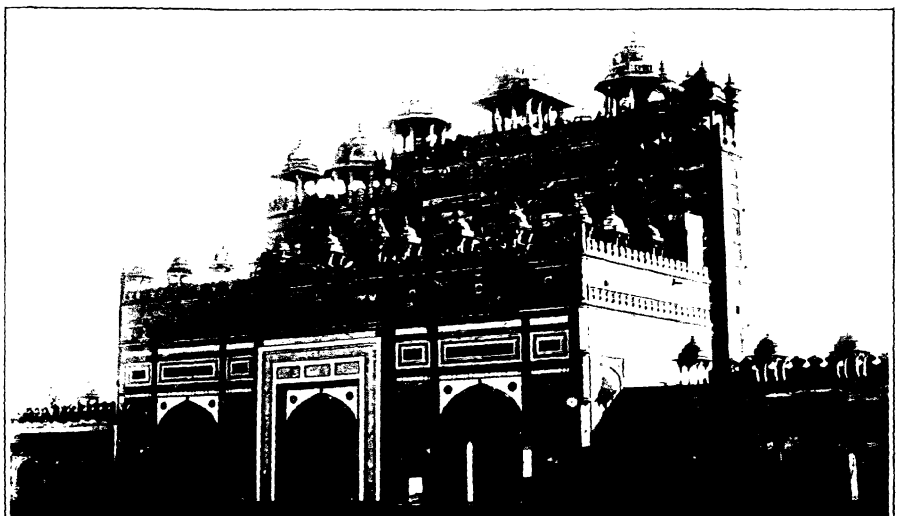
VI

TWO SONGS

I

THE character of the Emperor Akbar, as he is familiarly styled in the West, has always had a great fascination for intelligent mankind. His statesmanship both in peace and war places him in the foremost rank of the great rulers in the world's history, From all that one can read of him it would appear that his moral character was as remarkable as his political and military genius, and that his extraordinary toleration of every creed was perhaps his most conspicuous virtue at an epoch when tyranny and oppression were universally associated in men's minds with strength.

In Fatehpur Sikri, that marvellous city which he built some twenty miles from Agra, there remains a monument to many of his eminent qualities, to his piety and his prowess. Chief amongst its beauties is the famous Gate of Triumph, erected by Akbar after his subjugation of the Deccan to commemorate the completion of his conquest of India. Underneath the massive arch-way and inside the gate there is a band of white marble let into the wall in the form of a scroll,



FATEHPUR SIKRI, THE GATE OF VICTORY

upon which are inscribed certain maxims which guided the Emperor through life, and to whose influence he attributed the power and glory of his reign.

The following verses constitute an attempt to render into English some notion of the ethical standard which the Emperor is said to have set up as his ideal of a good man's life—based upon the maxims already alluded to. The doxology at the close is an almost literal translation of the superlative compliments which preface and terminate every address to Majesty in the East.

KING AKBAR

PROLOGUE

Wayfarer, born to high or low Estate,
In quest of happiness beyond the bourn
Of this dim planet where we moil and mourn,
Ponder the scroll on Akbar's Triumph Gate.

Learn how he held the power of Ind in fee,
Yet deemèd Virtue guerdon nobler far
Than diadem or victory in War,
And swayed the world in great Humility.

See how he sought the Infinite in the best
Of every Creed that owned him Lord and King;
And, each Ideal humbly worshipping,
Found Truth in all ere he returned to Rest.

How vain the life that dreams of Life
As all in all;
That cares for victory in the strife,
Fearing to fall;
That halts before the marble screen
Which veils from us the Great Unseen.

Rear not thine hopes of Paradise
Nor count thy pain
On Earth, through which the Spirit flies
To Heaven again;
Pass o'er the World-Bridge, nor delay
Thy travel toward the Promised Day.

Yet in thine Heart one temple raise
Upon the road,
Gem it with matchless prayer and praise
For thine own God.
Issa[1] hath said, "Who bends the knee
In Truth shall find Eternity."

II

Who bares his feet to tread the Sacred Court,
Who prostrate bends toward the hallowed West,
Whose lips are led in prayer, but whose thought
Is wrapped in carefulness for this world's best;
Vain are his vows of Service to the Lord
Who with a single heart must be adored.

Who by the Ganges' bank each early morn
Bedecks his images and shrines with flowers,
But, ere his votive offerings are outworn,

[1] Jesus.

Returns to evil through succeeding hours;
To him Great Brahma lends an unheeding ear,
Who should be sought in trembling and in fear.

Therefore be mindful, O ye Sons of Men,
Of things pertaining to your future Peace;
Give gladly to the weak thy wealth, and then
From this world's cares thou shalt have sure release;
Sell cheerfully thy stake on Earth, and buy
A goodlier heritage beyond the Sky.

III

Upon my marble couch I lie
Alone, beneath a sapphire sky.
The bulbul in the tamarind grove
Warbles his plaintive song of love;
The western Zephyrs kiss the stream
To sleep, and moonlight's dappled dream
Plays o'er her bed until the Dawn
Wakens her—then, like timorous fawn
At Man's approach, herself she hies
To the deep glade where Safety lies,
And is at Rest. How fain would I
Follow to such tranquillity.

Yet must I reign upon the ancestral Throne,
In State surrounded, but in Soul alone.
The panoply of Wealth no Solace brings,
Nor fortunate Arms, nor glittering power of Kings,
Nor courtly flatteries by fear procured;
Vain Shadows all! hardly to be endured
By God's Vicegerent on this suffering Earth,
This ghostly Carnival of pain and dearth.

Far happier he whose lines are laid apart,
Whose Court of Council meets within his heart;
Whose eyes discern the ideal life in Truth,
Ever adoring Beauty, Love, and Youth.
For, as the Sunlight spends its golden Dower
To glorify a world that owns its sway,
The very contemplation of God's Power
Transforms our darkness into Perfect Day.

DOXOLOGY

Shadow of God in Heaven!
King of all Kings on Earth!
Scion of ancient Majesty,
Creation hailed thy Birth

When, as the Morning Star
Wondrous, Thou did'st arise
Over this Earth-Race vigilant
For Daybreak through the skies.

Thine was the Rule of Right;
Thine the Appointed Way;
Thy Name rings through the Infinite
Thy Wisdom lives for aye.

On Earth apart—alone;
In Heaven God's Diwan;
Thy Memory reigns upon a Throne
Raised in the Heart of Man.

Shadow of God and King of Kings,
Before thy matchless Triumph Gate
Mankind in endless pæan sings
All Hail, Akbar! Akbar the Great!

II

The Love-story of the Emperor Shah Jehan and the peerless Arjamand will live for ever; one could wish that the Taj at Agra were certain of the same endurance to enrapture the eyes of posterity.

At sunrise or by moonlight the charm of its blameless splendour works a spell of peace upon all beholders. Words are too weak to convey any idea of the pathos and majesty, the purity and loneliness and grace of this marble dream. Its setting is in perfect harmony with itself; the gardens of the Taj are luxuriant and wonderfully tended: green parrots, radiant kingfishers, and tiny striped squirrels lend life and beauty to the scene; whilst the vultures hovering between dome and sky are as ever-present messengers from Death.

Beside the fairest tomb ever raised by man to the memory of Love this short Lament was written:

MY BELOVED IS DEAD

(THE LAMENT OF SHAH JEHAN)

SHE is dead, for the Mystic All-Seeing
Has bidden Her Soul wing its flight
To His Realm; and the Sun of my Being
Is shrouded in infinite Night.

II

What are Empery, Riches, or Pleasure,
In a world whence Her Spirit has fled?
What is life, when bereft of its Treasure,
Its Love? . . . My Belovèd is dead.

III

All Nations shall come, as of Duty,
To worship the path that She trod;
To gaze on the Shrine of Her beauty,
Who rests in the Garden of God.

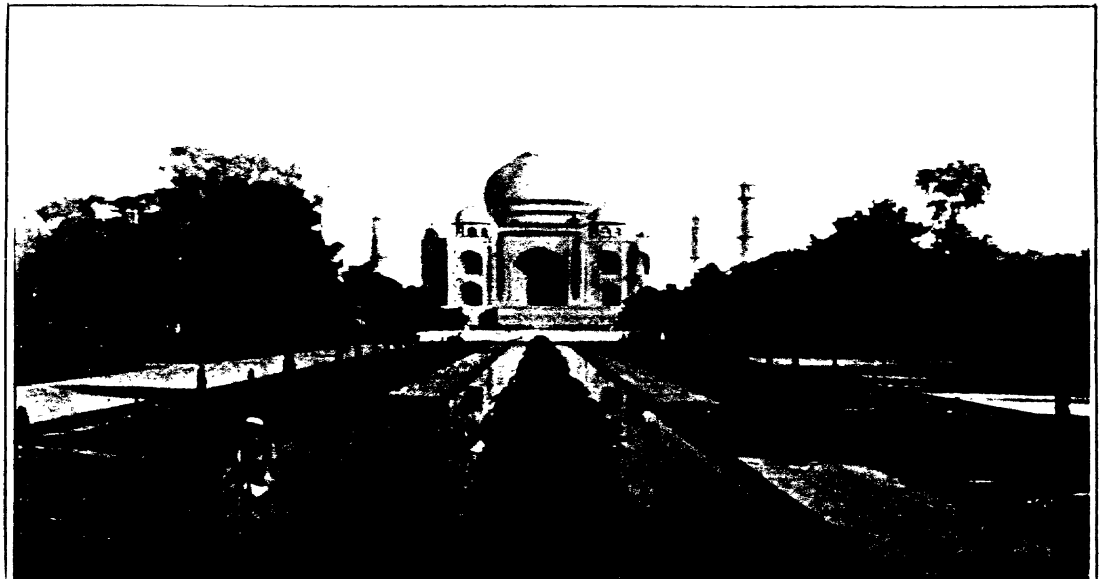
IV

I have pillowed Thy tomb in the Thunders
Of Heaven, mine Arjamand, Sweet:
And Earth has unbosomed Her Wonders
To spread them abroad at Thy Feet.

So, sleep, loving Heart, for to-morrow
Seràfil his trumpet shall sound,
And Souls that have slumbered in sorrow
Shall break from the desolate ground.

VI

Then arise through the Domes of Thy Prison,
Outsoar the dominion of Fate;
By the path where Love's incense has risen
Thou shalt meet me at last, in the Gate.



THE TAJ MAHAL

VII

PUBLIC SCHOOL LIFE

"THE Eton of the East." Thus spoke Lord Lytton, Viceroy of India, of the College which was founded in memory of Lord Mayo for the nobles of India in the year 1875. And, in truth, one has to see this wonderful institution in order to believe that the spirit of public school education can thrive at such a distance from the land of its birth, among peoples to whom its aims had hitherto been entirely foreign, and to whom its methods must, at the outset, have been absolutely repugnant. "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"—strange maxims to inculcate among the autocratic rulers of Native States, and yet that product of our English public schools, the just and upright gentleman, has left his mark upon the receptive native mind, which does not now hesitate to adopt our machinery in the belief that it will achieve for India a similar result. Thus it is that in the Bombay Presidency we find the Rajkot College, in the Punjab the Aitcheson College, and the Daly College in Central India, all combining with Mayo College in Rajputana to offer to the aristocracy of India what is best in the English system of public school life.

And since India is so dependent upon the

sagacity of her native rulers for her own prosperity and peace, it may not be without interest to give some account of one of these foundations in which chiefs and nobles have been cradled. I cannot preface such a description better than by quoting the words which fell from the late Viceroy, Lord Curzon, in his last address to the boys at Mayo College:—

"The chiefs and nobles in India have to fight against a double danger. On the one side is the survival of the archaic and obsolete idea that rank is a dispensation from work instead of a call to it, and that a chief need do nothing in the world beyond spend the money drawn from his people and enjoy himself. . . . The second danger is, in my judgment, far more alarming; that, in our desire to train up the rising generation to a wider conception of their duties, we may allow their training to run ahead of their opportunities, and may produce in them inclinations or capacities which are unsuited to their surroundings, or for which afterwards there is an insufficient field. . . . These colleges must not be forcing-houses, which stimulate an artificial growth or produce a precocious bloom, but open-air gardens, where the plant can follow a healthy and organic development. . . . Our idea is, that if a boy is to be a ruling chief, or a minister, or a magistrate, we want to give him the education that will make him a good ruler, or administrator, or judge; if he

is to be a *thakur* or *zemindar*, the education that will make him a good land-owner; if an Imperial cadet or an officer of Imperial Service troops, the education that will make him a good officer and leader of men."

With these aims in view, the chiefs' colleges have gone forward with a bound during the past few years; spurred on by the inspiring genius of Lord Curzon, reformed by the wise counsel of the Calcutta Conference, increasing in numbers and gaining in efficiency every term, they bid fair to leave a permanent mark upon the history of native rule in India.

The Mayo College is situated in Ajmere, in the heart of Rajputana, and is therefore most conveniently placed for its purpose. In the centre of a large park stands the College hall, and various boarding-houses are scattered about within the boundary walls. Each of these houses, with the exception of the Ajmere house (which is kept up by the Government of India), is maintained by a State in Rajputana, which makes itself responsible for the preservation of the fabric, for a native house-master, a religious instructor (or Shastri), and for the upkeep of its own garden. There are ten such houses, capable of holding from ten to twenty boys, and susceptible of enlargement as the occasion demands. Each house is tenanted by boys from the State that owns it, and each pupil has his own room and kitchen and servants. The

"messing" system has been introduced, and is rather cheaper, but Hindu prejudices are very deep and strong, and at present parents are inclined to prefer that their sons should eat alone, in the orthodox fashion. Over each house presides a resident native house-master, under the supervision of an English tutor, who is made responsible for the good order of two or three houses, and all are, of course, under the supreme charge of the Principal, Mr. C. W. Waddington, a Charterhouse and Oriel man and an old Oxford "blue." It would be hard to find a better occupant of this very responsible position: a good scholar and a keen sportsman, playing every game with the boys, riding and shooting with them, treating them as friend and schoolmaster in equal parts, he is devoted to them, and they worship him. Practically, he is supreme in the College; but he has a General Council, composed of representatives of the Indian Government and of Maharajahs, whose advice is most useful in settling difficult native questions of curriculum and problems of administration.

It is impossible to stay for many days as a guest in the College without finding out how devoted the boys are to their school: the loyalty of Etonians and Wykehamists to their "alma mater" is no whit in front of that of these young Rajputs for Mayo College. There is the same joy at returning after the holidays, the same keenness to beat every other school at every game, the

same genuine misery at leaving. Yet, how different is the life to which they come from the home-life which they have left, and to which one day they must return! Imagine the majority of them as small boys, never left out of their mothers' sight—and their mothers, in strict "purdah" all the time, in the inner court of some distant palace in the country: what a preparation for the rough-and-tumble of a public school! There is often the greatest difficulty in persuading these excellent ladies to part with their sons: "they have never left the home, never been out of the State, never mixed with other boys, never seen a white man." And when, after the exercise of protracted diplomacy, the young hopeful is ultimately brought into the outer world, his mother is utterly disconsolate, in the full assurance that she will never see her son again. The difficulty is sometimes increased after the first holidays, when a combination of the son's desire and the mother's will leads to an unauthorised extension of the vacation. This lasted so long from one college which I visited, that the lad was put under arrest and brought gently but firmly back to school. But one converse case came to my notice in Northern India—of an heir-apparent, who was not his father's favourite son, and who accordingly feared the worst. He ran away *to* school for protection, and nothing would induce him to return to his home, even for the holidays!

The Mayo College admits boys between the

ages of eight and fifteen, and even older if the lad can pass a decent entrance examination, and it keeps them till they are twenty if they wish to stay so long. Marriage is no bar, and there are consequently several married boys; but domestic felicity is confined to the holidays for bachelor and Benedick alike. The day's work is not at all unlike that of an English schoolboy, for whose information I will describe a "whole school-day" at Mayo College. There are "morning bells" at 6.15, 6.45, and 7 A.M., and at 7 o'clock sharp the boys have all to answer to their names at roll-call, which is taken by the College monitors. Then follows half-an-hour's exercise, to wake them up thoroughly, during which time they generally go to the gymnasium (where there are a couple of excellent instructors), or kick a football about in the various house quadrangles. At 7.30 the Hindus assemble at the temple for bathing and prayers, after which they return to their houses for an hour's preparation; the older boys, being privileged, work in their own rooms, whilst the juniors meet in the common-room and study under the supervision of their *motamid* or house-master. Breakfast follows, the chief meal of the day, and lasts until 10 o'clock. At this hour the school work begins, and the classes (I–VIII) gather in their separate class-rooms in the central building, to study until 1 P.M. From 1 to 2 P.M. is called the recess hour, when the boys are allowed to



MAYO COLLEGE CRICKET XI., 1906

do what they like, and the occupation varies according to the season of the year. In the afternoon there is school again from 2 to 4, and then recreation until 6 o'clock. At this hour the Hindus all go to service in their temple before the evening meal, which must be finished by 7.30, when the day closes with an hour's preparation for the next day's work. I should add that Wednesdays and Saturdays are half-holidays: there are fifteen whole-holidays and three vacations during the year.

It was very interesting to visit the various classes at their work, and to see the courses ordained for each. The senior division is named the Diploma Class, and is generally composed of boys who are just leaving the school to take up responsible duties as rulers of Native States, or as officials under Government. Their English studies during my stay included "The Merchant of Venice," "With the Royal Tour," and readings from important newspaper and magazine articles. Besides this they were studying English and Indian history, drawing maps, doing advanced mathematics, and working (according to the necessities of their future careers) at Law, Political Economy, and Revenue and Land Records. Of optional subjects, Science was a favourite one, though many of the boys preferred to take a second language, either Sanskrit or Persian.

And so through all the classes there was the same scheme of general education, carefully

graduated according to the ages of the pupils. I think that every Englishman making a tour of these class-rooms, as I did, would be utterly astonished to hear how well and intelligently the boys read English and speak it: very often there is scarcely a trace of any foreign accent in a language so totally different from their own. Even the youngest of them, after only two or three days at the school, can speak a few words, and can read from a primer the alphabet and words of one syllable. All the boys are very fond of English stories, and nearly every one has a dozen books by good authors on the bookshelves in his room. "Treasure Island" and "King Solomon's Mines," "The Chronicles of Count Antonio" and "Gulliver's Travels" are universal favourites; while one young Maharajah showed me with pride a complete library of Conan Doyle's writings, and begged me to tell that distinguished author that he had read them all four times! Apropos of the boys' rooms I never ceased being amazed at their tidiness. At all times of the day this was the case—not a thing out of place, not a particle of dust, not a picture awry. The furniture is of the simplest—a long, low bed, a table and a chair, a cupboard with spacious shelves for native dresses, *et voilà tout.* The decoration of the rooms is "according to taste," as the cookery books say, and varied according to the age and means of the occupants. But there are generally a few photographs or coloured

prints on the walls—of the King-Emperor, the ruler of the boy's State, Lord Roberts, a family portrait, and a college group. Others add a series of highly coloured representations of Hindu deities; others again adorn their rooms with trophies of the chase, or with specimens of old armour collected from the State to which they belong. As in an English school, so in Mayo College, the appearance of a boy's room is generally a fair indication of his character.

No account of this College would be complete without some reference to its athletic side, in which it excels every other school in India both in its opportunities and achievements. There are three cricket and three football elevens, each with a capital ground; indeed it would be difficult to name a prettier cricket-field than the match-ground, with its views of trees and distant mountains. The first eleven both in football and in cricket is a very formidable team, and holds a record of matches and wins of which any county might be proud. Then they have a good racquet-court, a dozen lawn-tennis courts, two riding-schools, a running-track, and the gymnasium which I have already mentioned. Riding is not compulsory, but nearly every pupil has one or two horses, since it is essential to the life of a Rajput that he should be absolutely at home upon his horse; and the result is that at no school in the world, I should think, can such horsemanship be seen. With all these occupations of work and

play, and with the example set by a quintette of energetic English masters, who coach the boys in every branch of athletics, there is not a "loafer" to be found in the College. As for the boys themselves, a better lot of fellows I have never come across. The tone set by the monitors is exceedingly high, and the discipline of the school is left almost entirely in their hands, with admirable effect. There is, however, one salutary influence over boys' conduct in these Indian colleges which has no counterpart at home, and that is the fear of any misconduct coming to the ears of the ruler of the State in which the delinquent lives; for the deep respect felt for the power of a Maharajah is one of the most potent influences in the life even of the youngest of his subjects.

Of miscellaneous topics of interest I should mention the Monitors' Society which has recently been started, and which meets every Saturday night. At these gatherings matters connected with the well-being of the College are discussed, and occasionally recommendations are made to the Head Master. Sometimes, too, most interesting papers are read, and a debate follows, with the object (much desired by the boys themselves) of learning early to speak well in public. A second innovation, dating from July 1904, is the institution of a mounted cadet corps, which is immensely popular. All the boys with horses join it, and very smart they look in their full-dress uniform of white serge frock-coats, with white

moleskin Jodhpur breeches, turbans and kamarbunds of the Rajputana colours, and Sam Browne belts and boots. They have already been inspected by Lord Kitchener, who complimented them on their efficiency; and they were publicly honoured during the past winter by being allowed to form the mounted escort for the Prince and Princess of Wales as they drove through the city of Jaipur. Last, but not least, I would note the birth of the *Mayo College Magazine*, a charming production, which has now reached the second year of its existence, and is conducted by the boys themselves. It is an exhaustive chronicle of all that is going on within the College; it records the struggles for the various house cups and inter-college prizes; it contains interesting articles about notable persons connected with the foundation, and instructive essays upon a variety of important subjects, admirably illustrated, and written sometimes by the masters and sometimes by the students.

So it will be seen that in the matter of public schools, India is following closely in the footsteps of England. The funds are provided from two sources, the Imperial Government and the Native States, each giving a considerable annual grant. The boys only pay about £3, 10s. a year, towards the Books, Games, and Medical Funds, and this is the sole expense to which their parents are put in the matter of school fees. Pocket-money is, of course, extra; for it will be remembered that

each boy has to provide his own food and servants. The following tables of monthly expenditure which has to be defrayed out of pocket-money are interesting; they are supplied for the information of parents in four scales of 40, 50, 100, and 200 rupees respectively. I annex Table 1 and Table 4, with the remark that for the keep of each horse and syce 25 rupees must be added.

(1) For a Boy in a Mess of three or four—

	Per Mensem. Rupees.
Kitchen	12
One Servant	9
Clothes	6
Miscellaneous	11
Pocket-money	2
Total	40

(4)

Kitchen	50
Five Servants	50
Clothes	30
Miscellaneous	50
Pocket-money	20
Total	200

Such, in brief outline, is public school life at the Mayo College; but, after all is said and done and written, the best tribute to the school, to its material worth and its moral influence, is found in the lives and the enduring affection of its old boys, who crowd to their "alma mater" during an appointed week in every year. Then Maharajahs, nobles, magistrates, officers, flock to Ajmere, and

their joy at meeting once more in the old place is delightful to witness. And beyond this they give tangible proof of their affection for their old school by offering challenge prizes, or by large donations to one school object or another. And not only the old boys, but also Princes who are interested in the movement, make liberal presents for the benefit of the College. The Maharajah Scindia, for instance, has given Rs. 20,000, for the equipment of a science laboratory; the Maharajah of Mysore gave Rs. 1000 to put the racquet-court in order; the Maharajahs of Dholpur and Kuch Behar and the Gaekwar of Baroda each presented Rs. 10,000 to the College Endowment Fund. The Maharajah of Jodhpur has lent the cadet corps the services of an instructor, and has made them a gift of fifty swords; and the Maharajah of Bikanir (a most enthusiastic old boy) has spent Rs. 30,000 on a new cricket pavilion. In this building our own public school boys and masters have taken a more than ordinary interest; and I am glad to know that many of our leading public schools have sent photographs of their school buildings, or playing-fields, or elevens, handsomely framed, to decorate this "temple of cricket," as tokens of friendship from afar.

To discern the future of India, and the destinies of its millions who now own His Majesty King Edward as their "King-Emperor," is not given to the sight of man. But there can be no

doubt that to have implanted the public school spirit in such a soil, with every assurance that its roots are already deep and that its fruit is ripening, is an achievement of which successive Viceroys may be proud and England may be glad. And the races of India themselves will, in the days to come, bless the hand that guided them out of the darkness, if their rulers will remain true to themselves and to the motto of Mayo College, "Let there be Light."

ADDENDUM TO CHAPTER VII

The following paper, which I am allowed to reprint from a recent number of the *Mayo College Magazine*, will prove far better than any words of mine the remarkable proficiency to which an Indian public school boy can attain in a foreign language, of whose rudiments he was profoundly ignorant only six years ago. This essay on the Bhils was written by H.H. the Maharawal of Dungarpur during his last year at the College. He is a splendid specimen of the kind of young noble who fully appreciates the advantages which a public school training can give to a native of India. He held a commission in the cadet corps, was in the football eleven, is an excellent game shot with gun and rifle, in the sixth form, and an omnivorous reader of English literature. Yet to me it remains an astounding fact that any Oriental of his age



H.H. THE MAHARAWAL OF DUNGARPUR

could have attained a mastery of a difficult foreign language sufficient to enable him to write so excellent a paper as this one; and I will add that, to my certain knowledge, there are at least six other boys now in the school whose contributions to the same Magazine would surprise, by their style and knowledge, every Englishman who reads them.

"THE BHILS

"By H.H. THE MAHARAWAL OF DUNGARPUR

"The Bhils, who are the original inhabitants of India, probably lived in the south-west portion of the Punjab, before the great Aryan invasions. They are now found in considerable numbers in the south of Rajputana, Central India, and Gujarat. My own State contains many thousand Bhils, but I regret to say they are not very desirable subjects. First, they are incurably lazy. When they have cultivated just sufficient corn to support themselves and their families, nothing will induce them to do any more honest work for the rest of the year. Secondly, they are inveterate poachers, and, in spite of all my injunctions, shoot down any game whenever they get the chance. And thirdly, they are, and have been from time immemorial, professional robbers. On the other hand, their loyalty is unequalled, and they are one and all ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their lord and master.

"They are generally middle-sized, handsome, and muscular, very brave, and when face to face with a

foe are extremely daring. Once when I was out shooting, a panther sprang on a Bhil, knocked him down and sat on him, digging his claws into the poor man's back. His companion, without a moment's hesitation, ran up with a naked sword in his hand, and with a couple of slashes, one over the head and the other on the back, laid the panther out *hors de combat.*

"All my Bhils are Hindus, and worship all the gods of Hinduism, especially Kali, Bhairon, and Hanuman, who are the three gods of war in the Hindu mythology. Their chief festivals are the Dasehra and the Holi. On the Dasehra a buffalo is sacrificed to Kali in every Bhil village. Great rewards are given to their bards, called *dholis*, and drinking, singing, and dancing go on all day and night. They are very fond of music, and their unending monotonous songs, in which the whole tribe join with the full strength of their lungs, can be heard afar off. Their dances are a kind of circular procession, each man holding a torch in one hand and a sword or stick in the other. They dance, beating the ground with their feet, in time to the music, and turning round and striking each other's weapons. Every five minutes or so, all the dancers give a simultaneous war whoop. At first the movement is slow, but it gradually gets quicker and quicker as the dancers get more and more excited, and not unfrequently the dance ends in a free fight.

"The Bhil is a great hunter, but his methods

are generally far from sportsmanlike. To kill pig he digs a long deep ditch, which he covers over with thin bamboos and grass. Leading out from both ends of this he builds two long fences, sometimes half-a-mile each in length. The pig are driven into the enclosure, and, rushing on, fall into the pit, where they are soon despatched with arrows or big rocks hurled from above.

"Their manner of killing black buck is rank poaching, but very ingenious. In the middle of the hot weather, two Bhils, each carrying a pot of water, start walking after a buck. They walk slowly, the idea being not to alarm the buck so that he will run away, and, if possible, they drive him in a circle. When this can be managed, one Bhil sits down and rests, waiting his turn, while the other takes up the pursuit. The poor buck is kept continually on the move through the awful heat of the day, and whenever he tries to approach water he is quietly and skilfully headed off. The chase begins early in the morning, and before evening the buck is so exhausted that his enemies can walk up to him and cut his throat.

"The Bhil is a very clean man. He likes to live on the top of a small barren hill or on the slope of a big mountain. He cannot bear to live on the flat. His house is beautifully neat and clean and has four doors, one on each side, to allow of the freest ventilation. In this he sets a good example to many people who consider

themselves far more highly civilised than the despised aborigine.

"The men wear a cloth round the middle, but otherwise are naked. Every Bhil boy, at the age of ten, has to undergo the ordeal of imprinting the *dag*. The village is assembled and the boy is led out where all can see him. His father then takes a live coal and lays it on the boy's forearm, just above the wrist. If the child cries out, the ceremony is over. But if he endures the pain in silence, another live coal is placed above the first, a third is placed above the second, and so on until human nature can stand the agony no longer and the boy yells with pain. Every Bhil has at least one *dag* or burnt spot on his arm, and the more he has the prouder he is, considering them as a true gauge of his youthful heroism.

"The Bhil women wear brass bangles called *pinjunias*, which fill up the entire space from the wrist to the elbow and from the ankle to the knee.

"Just as in the old days every gentleman carried a sword, so even at the present time every Bhil carries his bow and arrows wherever he goes, even if he goes a walk only of a mile. The bow and also the string are made of split bamboo, and the arrows are made from reed. The bows are about five feet six inches long, the arrows thirty inches. The points are of various shapes, like a dagger, spear, or half-moon, round, tapering, &c.

Three feathers are tied at the head in the most approved style, and the best arrows are winged with kites' or vultures' feathers.

"The Bhil procures his feathers in the following way. When a bullock dies, he digs close by a shallow pit in which he hides. His friends pull the dead body over the pit, so that the man beneath is hidden. A hole is left on one side sufficiently big for him to put out his arm. Soon the vultures come down to their accustomed feast, and begin gorging and fighting with each other. Directly one comes within reach, out shoots a brown sinewy arm. The legs are seized and the bird drawn down, when a quick stab finishes him off. In this way the Bhil will catch and kill half-a-dozen vultures, sufficient to provide him with feathers for a whole year.

"The Bhils' war-cry is called the *Khiiki*. It begins on a low note and rises higher and higher to a shrill scream. While it is being uttered, the Bhil slaps his mouth with his hand. The cry is thus broken into a succession of quick yells, the whole effect being very weird. The cry can be heard a very long way off, and, by taking it up from hill-top to hill-top, the Bhils can raise the whole country in one or two hours. I remember once an official was riding along, when a Bhil dog ran at his horse; rather cruelly he drew a pistol and shot the dog, and then seeing the owner coming, he set spurs to his horse and galloped off. The *Khiiki* was at once raised and flew from hill

to hill, and though the horse was a fast one, it had not gone a couple of miles before it was stopped by a line of Bhils drawn across the path and all ready to shoot, with arrows drawn to the head. The officer was made to pay compensation on the spot for the death of the dog before he was allowed to proceed.

"One more curious custom and I will finish. When a Bhil commits a crime, he, of course, at once disappears into the jungle. But if the ruler will give him his *bachan*—that is, a free permit to come and go and a twenty-four hours' start before pursuit is made—the criminal will come in and tell the authorities all they want to know about the crime, and especially who were his associates. Though quite willing to bear the burden of his own crime, he does not wish innocent people to be implicated, which shows that, after all, he is a sportsman at heart.

"BIJAYA SINGH, DUNGARPUR."

VIII

LUCKNOW, PAST AND PRESENT

FIFTY years ago Lucknow was swept by fire and drenched in blood. To-day it would be difficult to find in all our Eastern Empire a more radiant garden city, where the lawns grow green as in England, where roses and violets and eucharis lilies bloom in profusion, where palaces abound and pleasure grounds are plentiful; where business thrives and the whole population enjoys an ever-increasing prosperity. Fifty years ago Lucknow was begrimed with the smoke of battle, and mourning covered the face of the land; to-day she is decked fairer than any bride.

Few, indeed, of the old faces are left of those who knew her then in her tribulation as now in her joy: who can contrast the salvoes of welcome which greeted our Royal Prince on the occasion of his visit in the spring of 1906 with the cheers that hailed the mighty generals Outram and Havelock as they advanced through the gates of Hell to rescue their fellow-countrymen from the jaws of death. Perhaps a score of old hearts still beat within hail of the immortal Residency, most of them in the breasts of civilians who wear the medal for the defence of Lucknow; and with

one of these I was privileged to spend a whole day.

For forty years Mr. Hilton has lived continuously in Lucknow, and its changing story, which lent romance to his boyhood, now gives occupation and enjoyment to his advancing years. You would not think, as you observe his youthful gait and hear the glorious story of the defence of Lucknow from his lips, that he could be old enough to have been amongst the heroes of the beleaguered garrison in 1857. Yet he wears upon his coat that precious decoration which tells of hardship unspeakable and of victory won when he was but a schoolboy in the College of La Martinière. To go through Lucknow with Mr. Hilton is to live through those tragic days oneself. He can point out the site of the old church in cantonments where, on Saturday evening, the 30th of May, 1857, he and his fellow choristers were practising the "Magnificat," when suddenly the trumpets sounded the alarm and the choir practice was silenced for ever. In his "Guide to Lucknow," which, for facts and maps and stirring narrative, is invaluable to the visitor to that city, he tells the story of his return with other boys to the College; of the native cavalry soldier who bade them surrender themselves as his prisoners, but whose horse declined to approach their elephants and thus enable him to enforce compliance with his order; of their safe arrival at La Martinière and the view of the cantonments they had lately



LUCKNOW: THE RESIDENCY BILLIARD-ROOM AFTER THE SIEGE, 1857

left—now all ablaze. After this the College was set in order for defence, and none too soon; for a serious skirmish took place in its playing-fields within the next few days, and matters became so grave that the whole school was summoned by Sir Henry Lawrence to share the protection of the Residency. It is difficult to follow, even with such a guide, the road then taken; for the crowded streets of native dwellings and bazaars are now razed to the ground, and not a trace of them exists.

But, once within the sacred precincts of the Residency, there is not a wall or a pillar or a gateway whose stones cannot preach their sermon to us who come after, a story written in letters of fire upon Mr. Hilton's brain. As we enter the grounds, at Baillie's Guard Gate, riven and riddled by shot and shell, he shows us the embrasure for Aitken's death-dealing gun, and the spot where he and his youthful companion were surprised by an officer asleep at their post,

"Soldier all day and sentinel all through the night,"

but were let off with the warning that they deserved to be shot. He points out the swimming bath that he saw filled with grain by the wondrous prevision of Sir Henry Lawrence, and the hospital where he acted as attendant until the groans of the wounded and the dying men and women proved too much for him, and he begged to be sent back to military duty at his post. We

next pass the Residency itself, a beautiful ruin standing in a paradise of flowers and blossoming shrubs; we see the room where the noble chief received his death wound, over which waves the Union Jack upon the self-same turret where

"Ever aloft on the topmost roof the banner of England blew."

Then down to the sad sweet cemetery where lie hundreds of the best and bravest of our race, most of them in graves identified by Mr. Hilton's own knowledge and energy, and now marked with headstones bearing the victims' names. But some graves there are uncared for and unknown, mere mounds of earth over which the hostile and the careless have worn a straggling pathway. Strange, indeed, it is that the defenders of our faith and honour should be recompensed in such a fashion; stranger still will it be if, before another fifty years are accomplished, those twenty graves are not decently enclosed within a tiny sanctuary of their own.

And so to the Museum, which the stimulating genius of Lord Curzon, combined with the assistance of a few others, has now made a veritable treasure-house of Mutiny relics; on past the ruins of the ladies' quarters and the officers' mess, to La Martinière post. And there we stayed for a full two hours, listening to a story told with the grand simplicity of a soldier who has known death. From the spot upon which we stood, where the sick and wounded boys were tended, it was but

twenty feet across the road to the enemy's position in Johannes' storerooms, from the top of which "Bob the Nailer" directed his fatal rifle fire at every human form which he could see. The only defence was a rickety palisade, which was soon demolished, and an outhouse, which was blown up by a mine, thus leaving the school sick-house within sight and reach of the rebels for a few minutes. Yet the boys, being boys, scarcely knew their danger; they spun their tops when off duty, and cheerfully acted as domestics to the ladies when the servants had deserted to the enemy. Their chief delight, whilst their masters were seeking safer quarters, was to creep up to the roof and pot at their foes across the street, though their excitement was always too great to admit of a steady or deadly aim. But, as the siege wore on, the horror of the situation gradually dawned upon them; rations became scarce, they had to grind their own corn, draw their own water, wash (when they could) their only suit of clothes. And, as the weeks passed, their ranks grew thinner, and the elder boys were always on duty day and night, repelling the attacks of the enemy from dawn to sunset, and listening for the "murderous mole" at the mines during the long hours of darkness. In this connection Mr. Hilton told two stories of stirring incidents that put new life into the hearts not only of the boys but of the whole garrison. In the first instance they discovered a mine being worked just underneath their post; they dug like

fury toward the sound and, as soon as the open space was seen beneath, flung in hand grenades; thus the foul work of three rebel soldiers was abruptly stopped. The second great event was the laying of a mine to blow up Johannes' house, from which such deadly execution proceeded; it was completed, but not fired until it was seen that "Bob the Nailer" was upon the roof and ready to start operations. The match was then applied, and the African soldier fired no more.

Then fell the rains, the merciless torrential rains, that poured in upon the healthy and the sick alike, flooding the hospital, soaking the bedding on which they lay, drenching the clothes in which they stood; and in those very clothes they marched, after the relief, into Allahabad on the 7th of December. But the spirit of those boys who survived seems to have been undaunted. No sooner had the garrison been partially relieved by Outram and Havelock than dare-devilry began once more to assert itself. Tears turn to laughter as we hear of escapades into the nearest palace which had been incontinently deserted; of attempted looting of priceless articles; of siege rations munched by these boys as they lay on silken couches and drank what liquid they could find out of the rarest porcelain cups; and, finally, of the discovery of a room full of fireworks, whose explosion burnt the palace almost to the ground. But immediately thereafter followed two months

of terrible endurance, which proved the spirit of the British and of the loyal natives to the very uttermost; and out of that dread ordeal, men and women, old and young, black and white, came with flying colours and honours that will be paid whilst memory lasts. Of the hushed evacuation, in the silence of the night and under cover of the darkness, Mr. Hilton still speaks in tones of trembling amazement and wondering praise. His part was to convey what remained of the money and other valuables belonging to his old school back from the Residency to Dilkusha Palace, and the adventures of that short journey through shot and shell were enough to try the nerves of far older men.

But a word ought to be said of the many things that we owe to this good resident in Lucknow. To his suggestion is due much of the work of conservation of historic buildings which has been going on during the past ten years; his first-hand knowledge has been the means of identifying the hundred places of interest now marked by pillar or tablet within the area of that tremendous struggle; to him, from days long anterior to the antiquarian enthusiasm of Lord Curzon and the awakening of local bodies to a proper sense of their local obligations, we owe it that graves are kept tended and scenes of valour are recorded which might otherwise have passed into the long shadow of forgotten things.

The Residency, then, is the centre of interest to

every British subject who visits Lucknow; but that is not to say that fruitful and improving hours may not be spent outside its walls. In order thoroughly to appreciate for oneself the various movements and manœuvres connected with the siege and relief of Lucknow, no plan is better than that of driving from the Alam Bagh, some miles from the Residency, along the different routes taken by the relieving troops; in this way one sees, in historical sequence, such buildings as Dilkusha Palace, the Martinière College, the famous Sikandra Bagh, and all the other monuments which have each their special connection with Lucknow's heroic story of blood and tears. Even then it is difficult to imagine the crowded lanes of native houses which, half a century ago, were huddled up to the very walls of the Residency; for now we find important open spaces as the chief characteristic of this once densely crowded district. The native population has now drifted almost entirely into Lucknow city, whose bazaars are full of charm and beauty for those unfamiliar with scenes of street life in an Indian town. Happy, however, is the tourist who finds himself provided with an elephant on which to ride through these narrow and crowded thoroughfares; he is absolute master of the situation, as the people disperse to make way for his massive charger, and he can survey from a first-floor elevation the glittering collection of mankind and merchandise displayed on either side of his route.



LUCKNOW, 1907

One glimpse which I had into native life, and which is perhaps worth recording, followed from a kindly invitation to dine with one of the nawabs in the heart of the old city. My cicerone on this occasion was a distinguished member of the Indian Civil Service in residence at Lucknow. And it was lucky that I had as my companion so notable a figure, otherwise I doubt whether I should have ever reached my destination. However, after wandering about through the purlieus of the city for some time in search of our host's abode, my friend was finally recognised by the police. Then the situation changed; no longer was it a case of two white men poking about the town in a broken-down vehicle; it was the representative of Government about to honour a distinguished native gentleman at dinner. As a result, every policeman whom we saw became a forerunner of our chariot, displaying his zeal for law and order by laying about him unmercifully with his whip, but leaving his beat to the tender mercies of the burglar and the *badmash*. At last our progress, originally so humble, became a most imposing affair, and we finally arrived at our destination preceded by twenty policemen, the voluntary and somewhat embarrassing escort of our second-class hackney-cab.

At the porch our host received us, decked in the full uniform of a courtier in the service of the late Kings of Oude, and by him we were escorted across a picturesquely dilapidated courtyard to

his dining-room. This apartment was divided longitudinally by three archways, plastered with a yellow distemper, which had been decorated with palm branches to celebrate the occasion. Down the middle of one of the aisles thus formed a long table was set; it was covered with a soiled tablecloth of ancient date, upon which were spread some old china plates and some knives and forks of prehistoric antiquity. Incidentally, the *menus*, whose appearance neither of us had anticipated, were printed in English *upside down*. At this board we seated ourselves, the nawab and the magistrate in the centre of one side of the table (which would have seated fifty) facing another native and myself across the way. At the conclusion of our dinner, a meal through which periods of merriment alternated with long stretches of silence, we were summoned to a Nautch. I had never seen one of these far-famed entertainments, and must candidly confess it was not all my fancy had painted. The performance was held in another long and dreary chamber insufficiently lighted, at one end of which were four chairs upon which the host and his guests enthroned themselves. At our feet sat two charmingly dressed young ladies, who sang and danced by turns, and behind them squatted an orchestra of eight musicians, four of whom accompanied each "artiste." I fear that, owing to my abysmal ignorance of the language at that time, the ballads, in the vernacular, left me profoundly calm; but

the nawab, with courteous forethought, had arranged that there should be one item at least which his foreign guest could appreciate, and so one of the performers suddenly struck up an "English song." It consisted of a curious medley of "tags" from nursery rhymes and music-hall ditties, chanted to something like the original airs, whilst a knowing forefinger, pointed at each of the audience in turn, emphasised the hidden meaning. This closed our programme and we rose to take leave. Thereupon our host gave a sign, and a servant advanced with a tray covered with a pall of scarlet and gold. From this the nawab produced three handsome necklaces of filigree gold and blue velvet, placing one round the neck of each of his guests as he bade us good-night.

And so out into the darkness of the city once again, with the familiar strains of "Daisy, Daisy," still ringing in our ears, and haunted by the strange recitation of—

"Twinkl*ee*, twinkl*ee*, littl*ee* star."

IX

FAMINE ADMINISTRATION

I WONDER how many of us at home pay the very faintest attention to the short paragraph which appears regularly week by week in our London newspapers during the winter months, and which is headed "Indian Crop Prospects." It is to be feared that only a small minority are even aware of its publication, and that still fewer read it. Yet, to many millions of the King's subjects, its import is of infinitely higher consequence than the movements of princes, the results of wars, or the outcome of elections, to all of which and kindred subjects we give our earnest and undivided attention. The failure of the summer rains in the plains of India means the ruin of countless homes, the devastation by starvation and disease of millions of cattle and sheep and goats, misery and famine and death to thousands throughout the Indian Empire. If the Christmas rains also fail, as they perpetually do fail throughout Rajputana and in the Punjab and elsewhere, then the suffering of it all is intensified tenfold.

It cannot be too urgently impressed upon friends at home that this awful condition of things

has now existed in a more or less acute form for eleven years, with a break of one single year in 1900–1901, and that the non-existence of a permanent Mansion House Famine Fund must not be construed to mean that thousands upon thousands of poor natives are not every year in a condition bordering upon utter destitution through famine. I do not forget that over many areas the problem is simplified, and the suffering reduced, by the mere fact that the population has been sorely diminished by the ravages of previous years (amounting in certain localities to a decrease of 30 to 50 per cent. of the population), so that now the same acreage has fewer mouths to fill. Nor can one but thankfully recognise that, since the great famine of 1899–1900, Indian famine organisation has made tremendous strides towards perfection; and that by a system of combined effort, for which the Indian Government and native rulers and private purses can all claim equal shares of credit, the prevention of famine and its cure are consummations far more nearly attainable than they were ten years ago.

Unless one had seen with one's own eyes the heroic exertions, both mental and physical, put forth by Indian Civil Servants to cope with this lamentable and recurrent distress, and the princely generosity of Maharajahs and merchants, without whose financial assistance many a life-saving scheme could never have been undertaken, one would be inclined to think that such chivalry

belonged to an earlier age. But when one has seen it, one is compelled to ask this very awkward question: "Are we in England doing *our* full duty by these millions of poor people, for whose welfare we are almost wholly responsible; ought we not systematically, from the highest to the lowest, to give of our means for the preservation of those who are not on the verge, but in the vortex of starvation?" If their case were constantly kept before the large-hearted British public, and amplified in all its pathetic details, I have no doubt as to the response to such an appeal as I should like to see made. Then I feel sure that the bishops and clergy of every denomination would gladly set aside their collections upon one Sunday in each year for such an object, and would cause sermons to be preached which would inform their congregations of the sad condition of large numbers in the distant Empire of which we are so proud. The fund would be swelled by contributions from every one of our Universities and public schools and regiments and clubs, our Christian associations and trades-unions, our City companies, and great industrial communities; in short, I cannot believe that there is a corporate body, however humble, which would not be proud to associate itself to some extent with so worthy a movement. Such consideration would have a magical effect upon these destitute masses in the East; for in time they would realise that, even in the spacious days of Akbar, they could not count

upon such true liberality as that which they would then see flowing, not from the coffers of a despot into the hands of a fortunate few, but from the sympathetic heart of an united and democratic people, to which Providence has entrusted the destinies of India, into the homes of every famine-stricken family in the land.

During the winter of 1905–1906 I had opportunities of visiting several famine-smitten districts, and was able to form some personal estimate of the distress and of the efforts made to relieve it. In the Punjab and in Central India there was considerable apprehension, and already the cattle were dying off for want of fodder. "Times are so bad," said one old man to me, "that cattle thieving has stopped." The beasts were in such bad condition that they were not worth taking, and the price of food-stuffs was so high that it was cheaper to leave the animals in the possession of their lawful owners. In Rajputana matters were much worse, and people, as well as cattle, were struggling against fate to live. The southern part of Bikanir, the whole of Jodhpur, much of Udaipur and Jaipur and smaller States, were all of them suffering as not even they had suffered for the past five years. But, mercifully, precautions had been taken in time; and when it was seen that the great summer rains were denied to them, the rulers did not wait on the mere chance of a good winter rain; but, recognising the inevitable drought and dearth that must fall upon their

people, they opened famine relief works as early as the month of September.

I visited one of these famine camps near Jaipur at the invitation of the Maharajah, and it was a striking contrast to pass from the glittering streets of that wonderful city out into the sea of sand which is ever threatening to overwhelm it. Our road lay first towards Amber, a palace-fortress which overlooks Jaipur city, and was once the capital of the State. Upon our way we passed the dry basins of lakes, empty canals, the waterless beds of many life-giving streams. At the foot of the steep hill leading up to Amber we mounted an elephant and pursued our lonely way undistracted by traffic of any kind save that of a few poor women carrying faggots of wood upon their heads towards the city, where fuel is almost as scarce as food. From Amber we proceeded on horseback, and then by camel, into a stony tract of hilly country which, in its best days, could support its population upon a nominal living wage, but is now incapable of presenting any sign of animal or vegetable life to the human eye. Here and there a man might be seen half carrying a goat that could no longer walk; dogs were dying outside the walls of deserted villages, and calves lay at their last gasp across our path. At length, bending round one of the rocks, we came suddenly upon the famine work, and the barren earth was alive with human souls. We were at the opening of a large semi-circular plain, bordered with hills of a certain size,



IN A FAMINE CAMP



A PATHETIC FIGURE

from which, in the rainy season, full torrents flow down into the desert, to lose themselves in sand and space beyond. The famine work consisted in building a strong masonry wall across the plain from east to west, a distance of perhaps 500 yards, in order to store the water in the catchment lake thus formed, and thence lead it into carefully-constructed channels for the irrigation of thousands of arid acres which might thus be rendered fit for cultivation.

Let us stand upon the foundations of this wall and look towards the hills. In the distance fifty gangs of ten or twelve men are hewing at the stony earth, each at his own plot marked with a flag bearing the number of the gang. In attendance at each of these pits stand a score or so of women, and children over ten years of age, each with a basket to "lead" the earth thus excavated to the wall from which we survey the operations. It is a strangely busy scene after the lifeless loneliness of our ride. Long lines of draped figures, in single file, are striding towards us, their burdens upon their heads; a similar procession is swinging with easier gait back to the pits with baskets at their sides. Children of tender years are dotted about the plain, with crippled and haggard old men and women to act as caretakers. Outside the area of excavation are the "lines" in which the people live—straw huts, for the most part, with corrugated iron roofs. There, too, is the grain merchant's shop, where food can be bought

at a price sanctioned by the ruler of the State and his superintendent of famine works.

At the time of my visit there were about a thousand people in this camp, but the numbers were increasing every day, and no man could say how many people might not be engaged on this same work in the month of April. I was surprised to notice how few officials seemed necessary to overlook the work; there could not have been more than six of them in all. Their chief occupation consisted in measuring out the amount of the task which each "gang" must accomplish daily in order to earn a full wage, and in seeing that sanitary conditions were strictly adhered to. In most of the Native States the same wage is paid to all workers, men, women, and children. It varies with the price of corn from twopence to fourpence a day. For this small sum a man can buy his normal amount of food (with native condiments and fuel); a woman and a child have some margin, which will procure food for babies or other "dependants," who are not provided for. Every evening the task of each gang is measured, after which the pay for the previous day is doled out to the gang-masters for distribution. Every sort of precaution is taken to prevent pauperisation; therefore, the task must be a reasonably heavy one, and the pay has to be carefully regulated by the existing market wage. It has been found by experience that the loafers and casuals are the first to die when famine is acute, and

that regular work with a sufficiency of food is the best guarantee of health in a famine camp.

I have said nothing as yet about the "harrowing scenes" which are supposed to attach to such works as these, and to stimulate the indifferent into contributing to their maintenance. The truth is that, in a properly managed camp, run upon the most modern system and started in time, such "scenes" are almost absolutely preventable. And, therefore, when travellers visit a famine camp in India and see all classes cheery, though fine-drawn, working hard and free from disease, let it not be thought that this signifies an extravagant expenditure on poor relief, and that these are not the classes who should be provided for; for they are, in fact and in truth, the poorest of the poor, drawn from the surrounding villages, whose fields can no longer sustain them. Their cattle are dead, their capital is gone, their silver ornaments are sold, their small holdings are mortgaged; but the operation of a vastly improved organisation has brought them, before actual want and disease have ravaged them, to these relief centres, where they are cared for during nine months of every lean year. In Jaipur there were a score of camps similar to that which I visited, and before the spring they were doubled in order to maintain some 100,000 people.

In British territory a somewhat different system to that in use in the Native States is employed; indeed, several systems which vary according to local

conditions. One difference between the Native and British administration is that, under the British system, all comers are divided up into classes, and are paid according to the amount of work which it is computed that each individual can perform. A certain allowance is given to every "dependant," from the baby in arms to the tottering old centenarian, in order to insure direct evidence (whenever it may be called for) that nobody goes empty away. I saw one large relief work in the Ajmere —Merwara district—one of a dozen which had been in working order since the autumn throughout this regularly famine-ridden area, perhaps the most distressed in all India. There were 2100 on the works on Monday: on Tuesday I returned and found 2300; that is the rate at which destitution was increasing in all the Ajmere camps.

In this small British province, curiously situated in the heart of Rajputana, it has been found advisable to have a number of small camps instead of one very big one. Each camp is so situated that it can tap a large number of affected villages; the people are not hutted in "lines," since they prefer to work in the camps during the day, and walk back to sleep in their old homes at night. This system is advantageous in this particular locality, since it gives work to the population under conditions that are sympathetic to them. Experience has already shown that if the conditions are disliked by the workers, there is a

considerable increase of crime during the days of famine; trains which carry tons of sacks of grain through a stricken district are systematically looted, rich merchants are "held up" and robbed; but, if the work is congenial to the people and tactfully administered, then every village, however bad its reputation, is easily managed through these long periods of distress.

The work which I visited outside Ajmere consisted in the excavation of a large plain for material to metal the great highway which runs through Ajmere territory on its way from Agra to Ahmedabad. All the operations were being carried on within sight of the road, which presented the busiest spectacle imaginable. Stretching from the road into the plain were numberless gaily coloured flags, indicating the quarries of the separate gangs. From each of these proceeded a continuous stream of brightly dressed women, their arms and feet ornamented with bracelets and anklets of dull cheap metal, not so gleaming as in the days of their silver prosperity; of men of all ages and conditions, most of them in cotton rags; of children spindle-legged and nearly naked —all carrying their burden of stones to the road, and along it to their respective heaps sometimes a mile away. This was not so silent a crowd as that near Jaipur, though I believe its members were more destitute. They were chattering and laughing together as they marched along; and I thought the women looked happier than the men,

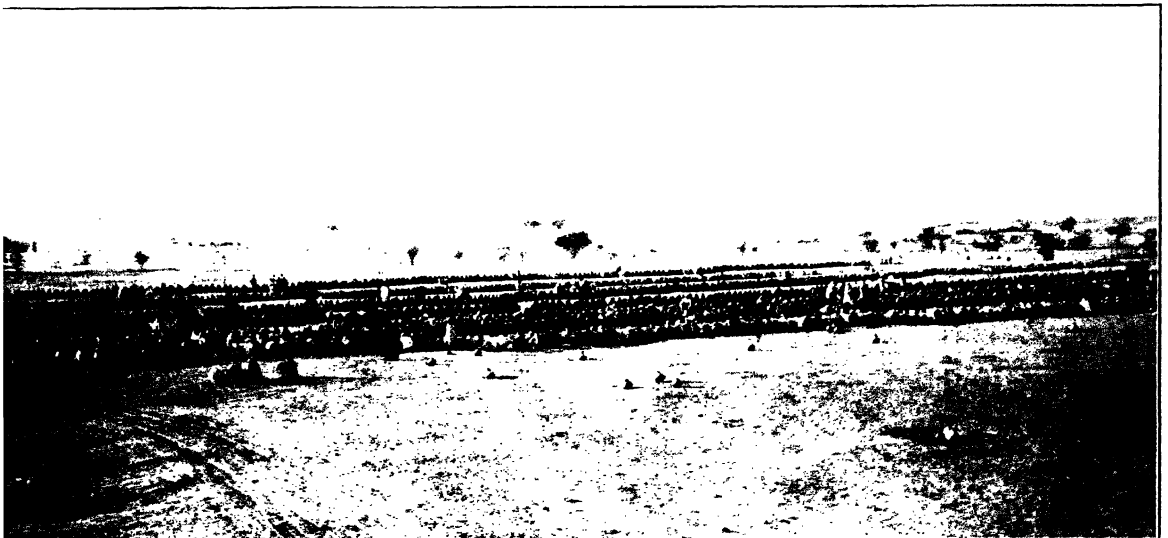
possibly because regular work is more familiar to them than to their lords and masters.

The following day I was present at a distribution of clothing, bought out of the Ajmere Famine Fund, to which the community had subscribed the large sum of 28,000 rupees. A similar distribution was taking place on the same day and at the same hour in each of the other twelve Ajmere camps, scores of miles apart. Of necessity no hint could be given that such distribution was contemplated; for, had it been known even the night before, the numbers in each camp would have been immediately doubled. At 9.30 we arrived, the Chief Famine Officer of the district and myself, with two native merchants who had liberally subscribed to the Fund and were now to take part in its application. The signal was given for a general muster, nobody but ourselves knew why; and in about one hour 2300 people were seated in rows upon the ground according to their gangs—men in the front row, women behind them, and then the children. Each gang was then inspected, and, during this process, which lasted two hours, I could see something of the destitute condition to which these poor people had been reduced. It was visible most of all amongst the female element, who had to open the head-shawl in which each respectable woman instinctively shrouds herself, in order to let the committee see what garments she most required. Then one saw the haggard faces and

the patient eyes; the lean and wasted bodies, against which, in the great majority of cases, tiny babies pressed and struggled for warmth and nourishment, but in vain. Their petticoats hung in rags, shawls were threadbare, breast-cloths in holes; there were not many whose names were not put down on the list to receive some necessary garment. The children seemed the best off; they wanted so little for their thin little brown bodies except food to fill them. Scores of the boys were naked, and glad to be so; and the little girls asked for no more than a stamped cotton shawl to wrap themselves in. It is only fair to say that this lengthy process of inspection, which was painful nearly all the time, was occasionally enlivened by the discovery that a women had hidden her best clothes beneath her basket, in front of which she stood; that a girl had covered quite a serviceable shawl with one that was all in tatters, or had wound a second petticoat, like an old sash, around her waist; that a small boy (and this one should have received a consolation prize for his audacity) stood up for inspection without a stitch of clothing to his back, having passed his loin-cloth and cotton shirt to a friend to secrete under a water-pot! But these instances of deception were few and far between; and, when they were exposed, the discomfiture of the miscreant was hailed with peals of merriment from the rest of the gang.

I shall never forget the roar of excitement

which followed the completion of this inspection, when the assembled multitude saw a line of men appearing upon the plain, each carrying an enormous bundle of clothing upon his head. These garments were piled behind us, and each gang was marched up for its members to receive that of which the inspection had proved them to be most in need. Of course, in every gang there was a score of disappointed ones; yet funds were limited, and the best possible under the circumstances was all that could be done. To nearly every boy a cotton cap was given; to every little girl a coloured shawl or a new petticoat. There were shawls and jackets and breast-cloths for the women; loin-cloths, rough cotton shirts, and sheeting for men; heavy blankets for the aged—gifts unexpected and unsolicited, which must surely have made them think that the age of miracles is not past. Time was, and not so long ago, when such a function would have been broken up at the outset by a raid upon the clothes and the committee at the hands of a miserable and undisciplined population. But to-day such an occurrence is barely thinkable, and nothing could have been more orderly than the marshalling of these deserving poor. To the Western mind it was somewhat surprising to note that in all that multitude there was not one who said "Thank you," or who even looked grateful for what he had received; and one had to be content with the assurance from those who knew the people best



INSPECTION BEFORE DISTRIBUTION OF CLOTHING AT A FAMINE CAMP

that there was, nevertheless, a feeling of thankfulness at the bottom of the recipients' hearts, and a deepening of the growing impression that the British Government in India does really care for its children. We went away as we had come, unexpected and unaccompanied by any outward sign of appreciation from the people that we were connected with an unusual and agreeable surprise.

Such an experience seems to lend even fiercer urgency to my plea that the people of England will actively associate themselves annually with this splendid work. The Indian public servants, from the highest to the lowest, work themselves to the bone in prosecuting their mission of mercy. The Native States, from the richest to the poorest, are now alive to their responsibilities; they organise vigorously and subscribe as generously as they can. It remains for us at home to awaken in a practical sense to the pitiful condition of our fellow-creatures and our fellow-subjects in this incomparable Empire, in parts of which there is permanently some degree of destitution from natural causes; and to translate our sense of responsibility from terms of barren sympathy into a nobler language, which shall express a national determination to take a regular share in the relief of what is a recurrent Imperial disaster.

X

SKETCHES ON THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

THE question is often asked by travellers whose holiday is limited, and whose time in India cannot exceed a fortnight, "What is most worth seeing within this short space of time at my disposal?" I answer without hesitation, "See all you can of the North-West Frontier and its tribes. Travel from Bombay to Lahore, and so through to Peshawar, where you will be brought into immediate contact with the most amazing collection of Asiatic tribesmen that can be assembled; with a set of British Frontier officers, for whose administration no praise can be too high; and with British regiments whose experiences of tribal warfare in the mountains rival for risk and endurance and courage any page that can be named in military history."

A very few years ago it would have been dangerous for a European to penetrate into the heart of Peshawar city; indeed, strangers were forbidden to enter it except with a special pass and a small escort. To-day it is at least as safe as several districts in London. You may now wander about there to your heart's content; your kodak is an object of interest to the barbaric-

looking community through which you thread your way; you can dive without danger into most of the ancient-looking shops in pursuit of Persian carpets or armour or furs; you can even penetrate into the booth of a travelling showman, and there, squatting on the ground, as I did, amid a motley collection of hill tribesmen, watch a flock of trained pigeons go through an admirable performance without fear of molestation. *Cela donne furieusement à penser.*

But no one will leave Peshawar without visiting the Khyber Pass on one of the two days in the week when it is open to the public. It is impossible to emerge from that mountain journey, so full of splendid associations, without feeling prouder of our fellow-subjects and their achievements than we were at starting. It has been my good fortune to drive through the Pass on two occasions with officers of the Khyber Rifles, and my apologies are due to them if I cannot convey some clear impression of their strangely fascinating province to the reader of this chapter.

The first part of the drive, from Peshawar to Jamrud—a distance of some ten miles—lies through the Cantonments, which are charmingly laid out, and then past a good stretch of heavily irrigated cultivation which, I believe, is worth some £60 an acre, but is very heavily assessed. Then, at a nullah, the cultivation stops, and dry, yellow, stony, scrubby land begins; through it a railway track is laid, which carries one train a day, and

makes on an average a gross taking *per diem* of three rupees, or 3.8, if a European goes by it. A mile or two before reaching its terminus a branch line is seen wending its way northward toward the Kabul River. This is the beginning of Lord Kitchener's Khyber Railway. The main line ceases at Jamrud, a lonely fort on the outskirt of British India: the fort is on the right and the offices and lines on the left of the road; all are loopholed and strongly fortified. From the top of the flagstaff-mound the mountains tower and frown, their bare jagged peaks seeming to spear the sky. To the left one looks down into Tirah country; to the right up to Fort Michni, Shabkedr, and the Kabul River. We halted for about an hour at the Fort, watching squads of young Afridis learning their infantry drill, and other batches of recruits gaining their first painful experience of life in a military riding-school; then, climbing to the flagstaff tower, we could survey the cluster of mud forts, each with its look-out loopholed, which stretch from the Fort to the foot of the mountains. The inhabitants of these forts do not invariably get on well with one another, but, being independent territory, every family has an unfettered right to shoot at its neighbour or burn the next village down to the ground, a practice which adds considerably to the liveliness of an otherwise dull locality. Only on the Khyber road, or fifty yards on either side, nobody may fire or be fired at. If the road is thus endangered, then

the *Sirkar* steps in, but not unless. But getting on to the highway, if bound for Peshawar or elsewhere on a peaceable errand, is a ticklish business; so each of these forts has built itself a subway, to enable its inhabitants to reach the road in safety. A curious instance occurred not long before my first visit, which shows the nature of the Khyber Rifles (who are quartered in Jamrud Fort) and of the internecine strife. Village A. had a blood-feud with Village B.; the owner of B. had built himself two towers inside his mud-walled serai. In the Khyber Rifles was a relation of the chief of Village A. He went away, as usual, for his Saturday and Sunday holiday, which he employed in a pitched battle with the B.'s; stormed and captured one of their forts, shot two of their men, blew up the other fort, and was back on parade, according to rule, on Monday morning!

From Jamrud to the Pass is a fairly flat road about two miles long, and then the ascent begins. The road is a first-rate one for the whole distance, and the scenery is grand. On our way we passed the Tuesday caravan going to Kabul from Peshawar—a string of some hundred camels heavily laden, of mules and donkeys, of goats, women, and children. These are all preceded by a guard of six Khyber Rifles, and a similar escort brings up the rear. With the caravan are a motley crowd of Afghans and Pathans—dark, hook-nosed, long-haired, keen-eyed men, dressed in all sorts of dirty

white raiment, baggy trousers, or lunghis, and generally a "poshteen," or rough yellow overcoat lined with long goat's hair. Across the backs of many were slung rifles, some of them Martinis or Sniders, and a few long-barrelled country guns called jezails. On the road this universal gun carrying was very noticeable; the rifle and a bandolier full of cartridges—the former generally at full cock—was the ordinary equipment of the Afridi. And so along; talking of the tribes and their ways, of poor General Havelock-Allan, who lost his life near Ali Musjid, until we reached that historic fortress towering up into the sky at the narrowest defile of the Pass. At its foot is a small white mosque, from which the place takes its name, where the good Mohammedans from Kabul bent to prayer in little groups as they passed. Leaving the carriage at the foot of the hill we walked up into the Fort, and were rewarded by a glorious view of the country back in the direction of Jamrud, with the Afghan caravan wearily winding its way along the Pass.

We next visited the block-houses of the Fort, after which, descending the other side of the hill by a tortuous path, we joined the tonga in the Pass and proceeded to Lundi Kotal, another eleven miles or so. As before, the road was picketed at intervals by the Khyber Rifles, whose posts can communicate visibly from one end of the Pass to the other. From Ali Musjid to Lundi Kotal the scenery is even more sheer and impressive,



ALI-MUSJID



LUNDI KOTAL

but there are more signs of life; and mud villages, each with its watch-tower, are numerous along the road. After an hour and a half's drive the Fort is reached, a high-built mud fortification, strongly loopholed and protected within and without by bullet-proof galleries for the marksmen and sentries on the walls. There we found Major Roos-Keppel, the Commandant, and the two officers, Captain Bickford and Lieutenant Lorimer (of the Guides), who are permanently in charge; with whom we immediately engaged in a great game of tennis—the wild Afridi being so far tamed as to dress in khaki and pick up the balls for us. After that we walked down the road in the direction of the frontier, to see the caravan come into the serai. Within this large walled compound all sorts of hangers-on were waiting to sell and buy; in a corner the cooking was going on, and I tasted a very good whole-meal scone just baked by a native, some lentil broth, and a curious rocky substance made of curds and salt, which the Pathan soaks in water and lets it trickle over his bread or into his soup. Gradually the caravan began to come in over the hill, a very picturesque sight, with the evening sky for background. Tired camels lazily stalked in and lay down where they were told; women ran eagerly about, picking up the manure that lay about for fuel; men clamoured for food and water; dogs fought; and Roos-Keppel lighted a cigarette and chaffed them all.

The next morning the Commandant and I

started back for Peshawar with our escort. At one of the villages near Ali Musjid he met a "Jirga" or assembly, from one of the clans in the neighbourhood. They had to answer for the sins of another clan (of the same tribe) who had lately fired eight shots on the Khyber Pass road. They met us on the side of the road—all armed with guns and knives—a fierce, ragged-looking lot, and they closed in upon us when we got down from the tum-tum. As usual, my friend first lighted his cigarette, then cocked his leg up on a rock and made them a speech in fluent *Pushtu*, which they all applauded. It was to the effect that he fined this clan 400 rupees (50 rupees a shot), and told them to get it from the offending clan, and as much more as they chose, for bringing the tribe into disgrace. Then began the native talk; they quarrelled all among themselves, and appeared ready to come to blows over and over again, but they found no fault with his award. When they had all done, he asked if his turn had come to speak again; and when they assented, he merely said, "I shall fine anybody who interrupts me five rupees," and finished the business.

Another "Jirga" waited for him further down, to receive praise and reward for capturing some horse thieves who used to go through their territory on their way from Peshawar with stolen goods. From there we drove without further incident back to Government House, saying good-bye to the Captain in the Guides at Jamrud on

the way, and I parted from my companion with the certain knowledge that he was the right man in the right place.

On his return to Peshawar from the Khyber, my advice to the traveller (whose fortnight in India is at my disposal) is to proceed once more to Lahore by the night train, and to explore that remarkable city and its environs. In the twelve hours at his command he will see some beautiful specimens of Hindu and Mohammedan architecture; on the giant walls of the great fort, once washed by the river Ravi, he will admire some of the finest coloured tile work in the world. There is then the Museum to visit, in which are stored a vast quantity of Græco-Buddhist remains that have been excavated from the mountains of the North-West Frontier, the Shalimar Gardens, and the beautiful tomb of Shah Jehangir at Shahdara. In these art treasures he will find large compensation for missing the glories of Delhi and Agra. Our journey now lies due south, following the valley of the Indus; a long, tedious, uneventful track for the tourist, but commercially and strategically invaluable to India. On reaching Ruk we strike northward again, into Baluchistan, by the railway which was first begun in 1879, after the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari, when it became necessary to devise a swift route for British troops to march *via* Quetta upon Kandahar. At Sibi we find

the junction of the two lines, known as the Bolan and the Harnai routes, by either of which we may continue the journey on to Quetta. When I was last at Sibi, in the month of February, the annual Horse Fair was taking place, and I strongly advise the traveller in these out-of-the-way parts to arrange that he shall be in this neighbourhood during the celebration of this annual festivity. The town is of the most elementary description, in the midst of a boundless plain, one of the hottest places in India. At this time, however, it was very agreeable, and as picturesque as anything one could wish to see. My first visit to the show was in company with one of the judges, soon after sunrise. The night camps had hardly broken up, and little circles of camels and horses and men, huddled round large fires, dotted the landscape. Gradually the place woke up, and men began to lead their strings of horses for classification to the judges' stand. Here and there we noticed jockeys taking their little Baluchi horses for a spin, preparatory to racing in the afternoon, and trotting camels being stretched in anticipation of their exciting contests. By this time the great horse-dealers, from Persia and Afghanistan and India, were gathering together, and in their midst sat the famous old Wazir Khan from Lahore, like some Oriental despot, impassive in his chair. By two o'clock in the afternoon the plain seemed to be literally crammed with people, all horse-lovers

and pleasure-seekers, bent on getting the very most out of their annual treat. As for the show-ring, it was a seething mass of horse-flesh: and how the judges got through their work so successfully will for ever remain a mystery to me. The show-ring proper was formed of two circles, an outer and an inner, with the judges' box in the centre. The first class to be judged was one for brood mares with foals by Government stallions. In this entry there were 283 mares shown with their progeny. All were rushed simultaneously into the ring, each led by a swarthy, shaggy syce in dirty white clothing, with a coloured puggari wound loosely round his head. The confusion that followed is indescribable: half the mares were heels upwards, kicking out right and left; the rest were neighing, the grooms were shouting, the company was yelling—the pandemonium was complete. Yet at the same time the exhibits were processing round the judges, who were standing in the centre of all this turmoil, and, in the intervals of dodging the horses' hoofs, were sending the cast-offs out of the ring and selecting sixty of the best to be examined in the inner circle. In a neighbouring compound there was a largely patronised "side-show," which consisted of a wrestling tournament between the strong men of the various tribes in Baluchistan. In the middle of the improvised ring was a square of broken ground, upon which three or four couples

wrestled at the same time, while a couple of highly embroidered judges sat solemnly on chairs beside them, and a band (consisting of two tom-toms) thrummed incessantly through the rounds. The competitors were splendid specimens of muscular humanity, who took their competition very seriously indeed. In the Baluchi form of wrestling, each combatant is assisted by his second to get a grip of his opponent, and then the struggle begins in deadly earnest. It generally ends by the winner whirling his antagonist round and round in the air; then, having lifted him high above his head, he flings him contemptuously on his back upon the ground. The conquest is then signalised by the victor, in an upright and rigid position, jumping up and down as fast as he can for the space of at least a minute, whilst the air is rent with the delighted exclamations of his friends.

Most popular of all events, however, and most picturesque, is the tent-pegging, for which no practising is allowed. Neither horse nor man know anything of the science of it; it is a high trial of the sporting eye and instinct both for the rider and his beast. Nevertheless every man rode for the peg as if his life depended on it. It was most exhilarating to see them, one after another, careering down the line upon their coarse-looking countrybreds, with high peaked saddles and square brass stirrups, their loose flowing robes and coloured sashes in the air



IN BELUCHISTAN: THE NAWAB OF BUGTI AND FAMILY

behind them, waving their lances and whooping with excitement. If the peg is missed the people are silent and disappointed, if it is taken the crowd is frantic with delight; and the artist, to exhibit his own satisfaction, with the peg transfixed upon the head of a very long spear, sways backwards and forwards and across his horse in the *abandon* of his triumph.

But, if no such congregation of the tribes is being held at Sibi, it is best to press on at once, by whichever of the two routes prove the more convenient, to our destination at Quetta, another important outpost of Empire. I shall not attempt to say that there is much for the tourist to see or to do in Quetta itself, but its *raison d'être* as a British possession of paramount importance may be measured by the number of native and British regiments quartered within its lines. Excursions may occasionally be made, always in company with some high authority, to the range of hills towards the north, whose formation gives to Quetta a very strong, if not a theoretically impregnable, position. The Passes, through which an attacking army would be bound to march from the plains of Afghanistan, are formidable indeed; and the experience of riding from Bostan station, through the Takatu defiles back to Quetta, gave me some knowledge of the difficulties which such an invader would have to encounter. Having now appreciated the value of Quetta as a base of operations, if such

should, unfortunately, ever be necessary, we may proceed by the ordinary daily train to the frontier of our Indian Empire at Chaman, beyond which stand the boundary posts which demarcate the limits of two great dominions. First we cross a long sandy plain, and then pass over the Lora River by a high level bridge. The Khojak Pass, the key to Baluchistan, must next be negotiated through a tunnel 4000 yards long, from which we emerge at the British outpost of Chaman, sixty miles from Kandahar. To give some adequate idea of the impression which one derives from the first sight of Afghanistan from this point, I must quote from an article written by Lord Curzon a good many years ago:—

"Before the tunnel was finished the range could be easily surmounted by the Khojak Pass, along whose gradients has also been constructed an excellent military road. If we mount to its summit, 7500 feet, and take the last step on to the crest of the ridge, there suddenly bursts upon our view one of those unique and startling spectacles which remain imprinted on the memory for ever. For miles and miles below us lies outstretched the great Kadani plain—an ocean of yellow sand—broken only by island rocks and ridges, and rolling evenly to the horizon, where, on the west, the tumbled billows of the Rijistan desert—a howling wilderness—seem under a light wind to smoke against the sky; while, in the northern distance, a range of mountains,

sixty miles distant, hides from our eyes the site of Kandahar. It is a historic and wonderful landscape. . . . Standing there upon the *ultima Thule* of British territory, in the heart of Central Asia, his must be a sluggish heart that does not feel a thrill of excitement at the memories of the past, of confidence in the destinies of the future. Behind is India with all its majestic associations, its wealth, its millions of people, its armies, its amazing strategical strength. In front stretch the 500 miles of Afghanistan ; and beyond, in the remote distance, is the formidable rival, to save India from whom all these precautions have been taken, and who, if he ever starts forth upon that 500 miles' march, will probably be advancing to a ruinous destruction."

Chaman itself seems little more than an ordinary village, lying at the foot of the Kwaja Amran range of mountains, as one approaches it from the railway station. Its residential population cannot be large, and consists almost entirely of Baluchis and Afghans and a few Indians. Its whole interest lies in its strategical importance, which is everywhere apparent—from the rails and telegraph wires and other appliances, which are stocked in anticipation of warlike eventualities, to the evident alertness which dominates the minds of the officers and men of the Baluchi regiments who form the British garrison on the frontier. I shall always remember with gratitude the hospitality which I received at the hands of these frontiermen, who spared neither

time nor trouble to show me all that was worth seeing in their fortress home, and I wish that time had permitted me to stay longer in such comfortable quarters as they provided. But, after riding out to the boundary marks—a line of white stone pillars, on each of which the token "E. A. B. 1891" is painted—and visiting the lines and the admirable military hospital, it was time to return to the station and settle down to a long journey back into India.

But, in the four days still at his disposal, I should like to persuade the hypothetical traveller (whom I am venturing to advise) to break his journey back to Bombay by going down to Karachi and seeing the second string to our bow in the event of having to land troops for the defence of our North-West Frontier and of the Empire which lies behind it. Karachi is a very prosperous-looking seaport town, and one cannot help surmising that, when the perpetual quarrel between the authorities of Bombay and Karachi is ultimately composed, the improving of Karachi harbour into a first-rate one, for the above-mentioned strategical reasons, will be a work of paramount public service.

From Karachi my friend must now return to Bombay, where he may employ his remaining day or two in studying the work of native municipalities, the cotton mills and other industries, the celebrated Arab stables, and Oriental life in a flourishing and famous city of the East. It is true that, if he spends his fortnight as I would have him spend it,

he will not have "done" the Taj, nor Jaipur, nor the Viceroy; but, having seen with his own eyes the tribes from the mountains which threaten us, and having heard with his own ears of the problems which beset us, and of their possible solution, from the lips of the men on the spot who have a right to speak; having seen the fairest specimens of Indian architecture in Lahore, and having travelled down the frontier (though only in the train), he will have laid the foundations of an abiding interest in a variety of Indian subjects which he will never regret.

XI

PATHAN CHARACTERISTICS

In the preceding chapter I have ventured to sketch out what I consider to be the most informing tour for a traveller in India who is pressed for time. No doubt my advice will be speedily challenged, and rightly so; because I admit that it is hard indeed to say, even for oneself, where the chief centre of English interest in India lies; for the country is so vast, and the history belonging to almost every part of it is so thrilling and intense. To some the supreme interest may be concentrated in Calcutta, with its old East Indian associations, Fort William, the Black Hole, and the rest. Others may feel that our influence had been wasted but for the outcome of the Indian Mutiny, and to these Delhi and Lucknow may mean more than all the other places they may visit. Others, again, will point to the Native States, each of them exhibiting unmistakable signs of progress, as it is accounted in the West, with their law-courts and hospitals and Imperial Service troops, and they will say that these are the true signs of our regenerating and beneficent influence. But I cannot help thinking that some (besides "globe-trotters" with a time-limit) whose mental

tendency it is to look ahead, will find their attention focussed upon the North-West Frontier, with all its racial, political, and military problems and anxieties for which we have made ourselves responsible. For these persons the interest will begin, and their confidence in our Government will be deepened, when they have visited the city of Lahore, within whose walls can be counted such monuments as the Fort of Akbar, the Palace of Jehangir, the Mosque of Aurungzebe, and the capital of Ranjit Singh, now occupied by representatives of Britain, and prospering under British rule; and when they have seen that most significant of all signs of wise administration, the Aitcheson College, in which youths of all families—Mohammedan, Hindu, and Sikh—pursue their courses of education, and compete in friendliest rivalry for the trophies of the class-room and of the cricket-field.

From Lahore a few hours' journey brings us to Rawal Pindi, the largest military centre in India, and then to Fort Attock, built by the Emperor Akbar at the end of the sixteenth century, a citadel which is said to have seen the passage of every conqueror of India as he crossed the Indus, from the days of Alexander the Great.

Thence to Peshawar, the flourishing settlement that smiles upon us in spite of the frowning and inhospitable mountain ranges by which we are almost surrounded. And here we feel at once that we are in the very heart of a country where the blessings of the "pax Britannica" have yet

to be known and felt, for there is scarcely an inch of ground before us to the north, or south, or west, whereon we have not had trouble with the tribes of Swat, or Khyber, or Waziristan. From the steps of Government House we can see far beyond the line whereat the rule of British law ceases, to the distant ranges of mountains inhabited by tribes whose method of summary punishment, whether for domestic or foreign crime, obviate any necessity for courts of appeal or the intervention of the legal profession. News of their internal conflicts reaches Peshawar almost every day from one quarter or another—of a village blown up by the mine of its next-door neighbour, or of vengeance wreaked by the member of one family upon another, whose conduct has constituted an outrage upon the pride of the avenger's ancestral home.

No doubt things are very much better than they were not so long ago; but scarcely a day passes without stories being brought into the capital of the new province of some act of daring cunning (or worse) perpetrated by the hardier spirits whose homes are in the hills, upon the more peaceably inclined inhabitants of the plains just beyond the boundary of British jurisdiction. Luckily, as I have said, it is no part of our business to interfere with such domestic quarrels; indeed, our time is fully occupied in endeavouring to prevent these wild villagers from raiding the wealthy citizens and the police outposts of Peshawar. For the love of adventure and the greed of gold are amongst



A DETACHMENT OF KHYBER RIFLES

the liveliest sentiments of the Afridi heart; and the peaceful inhabitants of Peshawar are often enough awakened by the firing of guns within and without the city walls, by which token they know that somebody has been invaded by the hill people, and that probably the miscreants have escaped detention, and have retreated beyond the border.

In one of such midnight adventures Jaffir Khan, a notorious thief, lost his life in December 1905 at the hands of the banker he had come to rob, though his band escaped with a considerable quantity of ill-gotten gains. In the majority of cases the robbers score heavily, as upon a recent occasion, when a poor Afridi knocked pitifully at the door of a police outpost, begging to be admitted, since he had been shamefully misused by a neighbouring village within the British lines. The gate was opened and in he came, as well as the rest of his gang, who overpowered the post, held a mock court-martial on its occupants, and disappeared with their rifles to the mountains. Only recently, an old man was pointed out to me beyond Ali Musjid, riding respectably upon his ass up the hill toward a desolate-looking mud tower. In the previous month he had murdered his son and daughter-in-law with their two children, in order to make sure of a certain inheritance; but, as these things were not done within eighty yards of the Khyber Road, we (the British Government) have no power to punish. Yet it must not

be supposed that, under all circumstances, the murderer gets off scot-free; occasionally the "Jirga," or district council, takes serious notice of his action, which is criminal or not according to the evidence given as to the murder having been secret (which is punishable) or open. In the instance which I have just cited, it seems that etiquette had been complied with, though that argument did not avail when the offender took a chicken, as a tentative peace-offering, to the British Commandant of the Khyber Rifles, whose personality and position are enormously respected in those regions. The offering was spurned, and the old man was not received, a course which led to his considerable degradation in the eyes of his neighbours. But, in general cases of village theft or secret murder, the "Jirga" can deal out the severest punishment. For theft they will outlaw a man and confiscate his property; and for secret murder, in the northern tracts of the Hindu Kush, it is the custom to hand over the malefactor to be killed by the women of the district. Such is one aspect of these wild tribes upon our frontier, with whom our political officers come into daily contact.

The conversation of these most responsible and efficient members of a brilliant branch of our public service in India is sufficient to convince every one of their intense interest in their work, of their understanding of the native mind, of their appreciation of the native qualities. Great praise,

for instance, is given by them to the fighting capacity of the inhabitants of Swat and Bajour, and many are the stories of the bravery of the Swat tribes during their resistance to the Malakand Field Force. To illustrate their absolute recklessness of life, I was told of a Swat soldier who, though mortally wounded, made his way to one of the lost standards which lay right in the firing line. He raised it aloft, and with it paced slowly towards the British troops until he was finally shot down. Upon another occasion four men were left upon an exposed hill position which their comrades had deserted. They fired upon our troops until their ammunition was all spent, and then began throwing stones at the advancing line. One by one they were shot, till a sole survivor remained. He drew his sword, and forthwith charged down the hill with such fearless impetuosity that he twice broke the advance guard of the opposing British regiment before he was cut down.

Yet these warlike tribes are tractable enough when they have ascertained that their conquerors are in earnest and determined to remain in the country that they have won by force of arms. I remember that when I was travelling up to the Malakand, about five years after the war, our escort from Dargai consisted entirely of mounted soldiers from the Swat levies, and men of the same corps manned the posts and pickets along that rugged road. I think the infantry only received seven rupees a month, and the cavalry twenty rupees, at that time;

but I was told that the force was, nevertheless, a very popular one, and that the authorities had more recruits than they knew what to do with; showing that, although beaten, their military ardour remains unquenched and of real advantage to those who know how to direct it. Such an one was the late General Sir Power Palmer, whose instinctive knowledge of native character has rarely, if ever, been excelled by any of his predecessors in the important office of Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army. He told me a characteristic story of this very peculiarity, the amenity of the hill-soldier to his actual master. The General was riding through the village of Butkhela on his way to inspect the Fort of Chakdara, and was not a little astonished to notice every evidence of civil war in progress; barricaded houses, bullets flying, bloodshed, and so on. On his return from inspection, a few hours later, he observed that all was peace; and on inquiry he was informed that, learning of his presence, the engagement had been postponed, since the combatants had been advised that it was not respectful to fight whilst the Commander-in-Chief was in the neighbourhood! I stopped at this village myself on my return from Chakdara, and was refreshed by the hospitality of the village "Jirga." These amiable gentlemen had just been released *en bloc* from a ten-days' detention in Malakand, whither they had been summoned by our Resident to decide how to catch and punish a village murderer. As usual, the two sides of the

council could not agree immediately, so they were entertained and occupied with work in various gardens until they did manage to come to a satisfactory understanding as to the *modus operandi.*

It is in outposts of the Empire like this that one learns to appreciate at their true value the great qualities of our public servants in India, where the *man* is everything and measures are but a secondary consideration. Many instances might be cited to show the methods by which these frontier tribes are led to give obedience, and even devoted loyalty, to those who are expected to influence them for good; methods which prove how thoroughly a man must master the native character before he can hope to mould it. I will only quote two. During the Malakand rising a few native tribes stood fast to us, and the Mullahs used every effort to arouse their fanaticism. An exemplary method of dealing with these men was invented by one frontier officer who, with his escort, came upon a number of Mullahs, inciting a friendly tribe to take up arms against the British. Riding straight up to them in the middle of the crowd, he bade them stand in a row, and turn to a certain passage in the Koran which each held in his hand. Having found the passage, he invited them to recite it in unison for half-an-hour before the assembled people, and its burthen was that "the people shall give obedience to the rulers of the land." So the crisis passed and the clan stood firm. And who but a thorough master of these people's character would

have dealt with a recalcitrant headman as follows? He desired the man to come to his bungalow and speak with him; the agitator arrived in patent leather shoes and a European frock-coat. Instead of talking over the matter (which was serious) in his private room, our officer started walking with the headman a little way in front of their horses, which were led by syces. They walked through populous villages, where both were well known, and talked affably, though the portly chieftain was becoming more and more exhausted at every step. He tried by every conceivable means to suggest riding as a preferable method of locomotion, but the wily British officer would have none of it. Meanwhile the sun waxed more powerful, and the road became more stony, until the native said he must sit down, but the sahib pointed out the disrespect implied in such a suggestion. Finally, after walking six miles, the officer broached the matter of contention, upon which the native unreservedly gave in, and declared he would agree to anything if only he might get on his horse. Thus a reasonable and just agreement was ultimately come to, and has never been broken; the contracting parties are still fast friends, and the native constantly tells the story with great good-humour against himself. Thus much for the bravery and tenacity of the Pathan character. It cannot be too strenuously insisted upon that the instinctive desire of these tribes in all the affairs of life is to settle who is the stronger man. It runs through their village existence, their religious

teaching, and their ideas of external relations. They have their blood-feuds among themselves, which provoke warfare almost every day; and, whilst the adults fire at one another with bullets, the children are taught to stone their fellows across the nearest ditch. Similarly their periodical fanatical risings are intended to prove the superiority of the Crescent to the Cross,[1] and their daily dealings with the British over the border are meant to result in the survival of the fittest. This is their tradition and their training; but it is also theirs to know when they are beaten, whether by force of argument or arms.

[1] A figure of speech which conveys to the Western world the conflict between Mohammedan and Christian ideas, but is probably incomprehensible to the Pathans themselves, to whom neither emblem is significant of a religious community.

XII

PROBLEMS OF THE FRONTIER

AMONG the many beneficial changes in Indian administration with which history will credit Lord Curzon, none has been more quickly justified by its results than the partition of the Punjab for the greater advantage of the old province and the new. One can well believe that, in the days before that partition was effected, the Lieutenant-Governor was tremendously hampered by the double task of working out two sets of problems, and of administering the affairs of two sets of races so utterly different from one another as those which lie east and west of the river Indus. The more formidable did his task become when the frontier policy prescribed from home was one of "peaceful penetration," of personal contact between the Governor and the tribes. It will at once be seen that, to carry such a policy successfully into effect, it was necessary that the British administration should be at least doubly staffed, with a large proportion of men specially trained to deal with the complexities of politics on the frontier. The position was therefore simplified, once and for all, by transferring the conduct of tribal affairs from Lahore to Peshawar.

There seems to be but little doubt that, in the main, this system of "peaceful penetration" has been most successfully worked, and has made for peace and goodwill; but, at the same time, we should be extremely rash to assume that it is the only policy, or, at all times, the most efficient one. For, so long as our dealings are with a congregation of races having no fixed policy of their own, the fixity of our methods should be confined within the limits of effective practice, and no considerations of continuity or tradition should be allowed to stand in the way of their removal when once their value be proved to have disappeared. So long as tribes are peaceably inclined, no line of political conduct could be more sensible than that of cultivating good personal relations and of interfering as little as possible with the internal affairs of the people of the country. But, if the love of peace were a salient characteristic of these highlanders, there would be no frontier problem, whose complexities arouse such diverse schools of opinion in the civil and military worlds. The problem, as I understand it, begins when these peaceful conditions are menaced from without or disturbed from within. Then, what is the proper course to adopt; then, upon what form of punishment or persuasion is "peaceful penetration" entitled to rely?

So far, to all outward appearances, our pacific policy has come through the ordeal of its early years of probation with tolerable credit. It has

proved effective and inexpensive to the taxpayers of India. Its most recent trial has been in the case of the Mahsuds, whose determined intractability very nearly led to a form of penetration other than peaceful into their mountain strongholds. These Mahsud Waziris have been described as the "undesirables" of Waziristan, looked on askance by their neighbours, and mistrusted even by their fellows in the tribal militia. They are of the clan who have murdered several British officers within the past two years, and have paralysed, through fear, the native officials whose work for Government lies in their vicinity. They are the class of men who might, at any moment, make an expedition imperative, not so much for the sake of punishing the murderers of British officials (though that were justification enough) as in the cause of tranquillity throughout Waziristan; for it must not be forgotten that injudicious pardon and one-sided conciliation have never promoted peace. Indeed, the only emotion inspired in the native breast by such misplaced generosity is always one of confidence that the *Sirkar* will sacrifice anything for the sake of avoiding warfare. It was this delusion that largely contributed to the last Afridi war; when the tribes were convinced that a policy of murder and systematic aggression would drive the Government backward to the Indus and not forward to the Durand line; that, although they blocked the Khyber Pass and attacked our military posts, we would never



PESHAWAR: AT THE BARBER'S



THE POTTER

march an army into their country. And this long-suffering attitude must, upon any other grounds save those of fear, seem inexplicable to the Waziris themselves, who, if similar outrages had been committed by the Mahsuds upon them, and if they were rid of the personal influence of British officials, would make short work of this small but stubborn sect of "undesirables" in their midst.

It will be remembered that, not so long ago, it was our policy to endeavour to extend British influence amongst the tribes by encouraging political officers to go in and out amongst them, hoping that other external influences might thus be counteracted, freedom of trade maintained, and the control of the Passes into India established. But it was perfectly understood by all that if, in the course of these risky negotiations, frontier officers were molested or murdered by fanaticism or design, then punishment would follow swift and sure. The published institution of some such penal corollary to the infringement of our policy of peace would, I believe, go far to maintain order among the tribes and to restore confidence among our officers on the frontier. One cannot listen patiently to evidence of the recrudescence of racial restlessness on the Afridi border, of tribes encroaching upon British territory, of criminals being harboured, of outposts rushed for arms and ammunition, of gangs of rifle thieves organised in the mountains to operate all over India, without

wishing that the frontier races were as fully persuaded of Britain's determination to avenge crime as they are of her insatiable desire for peace.

An alternative frontier policy, full of possibility of success, yet more adventurous, may be described as the "Sandeman" policy, applied to the whole length of territory between the Tochi Valley and Chitral. Now, the "Sandeman" policy is capable of two interpretations, differing according to the taste of the translator. By many persons it is supposed to have been a policy of "mingled courage and conciliation," a policy of "confidence, peace, and good-will." But when that system, which bore such admirable fruit in Baluchistan, is discussed upon the frontier itself, it is fearlessly asserted to have been one achieved by the combined assistance of money and armed force. "It may be right," I have been told over and over again, "but it is very expensive." It was a policy of annexation pure and simple, which deprived tribes of their independence, which entailed the imposition of revenue, the constant movement of troops, the raising of levies under British officers, as well as a grant of handsome allowances to chiefs of tribes, and a scrupulous respect for tribal customs. But Sandeman had a free hand; he was hampered by no orders as to non-interference; and, if he turned a blind eye to the perusal of instructions from the Government of India and pursued his own policy unflinchingly, it was found that the success which

attended it justified a course which to-day might be censured as undisciplined. And, in passing, let me take note of a point which advocates of the extension of the Sandeman policy may possibly have overlooked. The case of Baluchistan is not at all the same as that of the North-West frontier. In the former province our administrators had to deal with a large area, sparsely populated by about 800,000 persons, in no sense forming a community of clans closely connected by blood and ready to combine under a single leader, as was the case with the North-West frontier tribes at Umbeyla in 1863. The Baluchis have always been distinct tribes, owning the sway of separate chieftains, and the discipline of the tribe has grown with the power of its ruler. In everything the chief is responsible for the tribe, even to saying his people's prayers for them. Fanaticism is not a constant danger upon that portion of our Afghan frontier. But, between the Tochi Valley and Chitral, the premises are different, so the conclusion cannot be the same. There, if the chief of a tribe becomes strong, other sections intrigue to overthrow him and to set up rivals in his stead; sub-sections are created out of blood-feuds, and it becomes impossible to treat with any tribe as an entity. Besides which, this long tract of country is inhabited by highly combative races (there are 80,000 first-class fighting men between the Kabul and the Swat Rivers alone —more than in all Baluchistan), all of them keenly

sensitive to religious influences which may easily be transformed into fanatical risings. So that, although on the North-West frontier the extension of the Sandeman policy may be right and practicable, we must clearly understand that it would have to be applied to a set of problems in no sense analogous to those of Baluchistan, where it has been amply justified from its inception.

But I can easily understand that, both in England and in India, there are many students of this difficult problem, and a far larger number of persons who have never tried to master its complexities, to whom the two policies already referred to may seem to bring not peace but a sword. There is, for them, a third alternative to consider; one which is constantly referred to, and occasionally advised as less likely to cause friction between ourselves and our neighbours on the hills. I will state it in a few words, in order that a just comparison may be made of the benefits which might follow from the adoption of any one of the three main proposals which are sincerely advanced in the interests of peace. This third school of frontier experts would be inclined to cancel the instructions to frontier officers that they are to go in and out amongst the Pathans, on the ground that, however friendly may be the footing found by our representative, he will never be able to compete against the wave of fanaticism that periodically passes over these susceptible people. At the same time, it could be made clear to all the tribes concerned

that if they desire our protection and ask for it they shall have it, and that the corollary to absolute non-interference is severe punishment for tribal aggression. Such a request for British protection is far from uncommon, but it has almost invariably been refused upon the ground of expense; although, if the responsibility had, in certain instances, been accepted, the influence of Great Britain might have been more potent for peace upon our borders than has hitherto been the case.

I make no apology for having set out at length some aspects of the frontier problem, and a few of the forms in which its solution is presented by men who have studied the question with unremitting care. The problem is no new one; it may be said to have thwarted, in some degree, all the rulers of India from the days of Akbar the Great, who always found the North-West frontier a difficult one to control. Soon after Akbar's accession a Hindu soldier, named Pir Roshnai, founded a sect of his own among the Afghans, which soon became famous (under the pious founder's son, Jelala) by its daring act of closing the Passes between Afghanistan and India, at a time when Kabul was an appanage to Akbar's Indian Empire. Twenty years of fierce fighting elapsed before the sectaries were finally crushed, after a vast outpouring of blood and treasure. The history of those years introduces us to many names that have become familiar in these latter

days. The Fort of Chakdara (Jag-dara), near the Malakand, was then built by General Man Singh, Governor of Kabul; the tribes of Swat and Bajour then established their fighting fame with armies of 30,000 and 40,000 men; the people of Karaghar and of Buner were never subdued, though seven of their armies were destroyed, and the hosts of Akbar could count a score of victories. Yet here, as elsewhere throughout India, Akbar ultimately triumphed by virtue of the strength and patience of his methods. And if, in our time, we are truly desirous of peace, we can surely attain it with these splendid tribes if we will but conform to their old-world way of looking at things; if we do but show them by signs which they cannot mistake, and which any frontier officer of experience can indicate, that, where we reign in theory—as we must continue to do for the sake of those tribes who have plighted us their troth —we propose to govern in fact.

XIII

TRIBES ON THE NORTH-EAST FRONTIER

We all believe, with the strength of proud conviction, that the British Empire is governed by the heart rather than the head, that her provinces won by force are kept by friendship, and that upon the silken cord of mutual sympathy are threaded the Colonies and Dependencies in a jewelled necklace around the throat of the Motherland. How else can we ever hope to keep for our own the vast collection of tribes, with all their different creeds, customs, and aspirations, which go to make up this Empire? To preserve that sympathy and to ripen that friendship is primarily the duty, as it must be the privilege, of our Governments, whether Whig or Tory; yet how little the home public really knows of the wonderful races thus held in allegiance to the British Crown, or of those upon our boundaries—to whom our methods of government are equally important.

Nowhere in India does one see a more striking collection of these tribes than in the neighbourhood of Darjeeling, and I confess that the impression which they left upon my mind was no less deep than that of the eternal snows of Everest and Kinchinjunga. Of these latter, I shall not

dare to write, nor to attempt a description where so many pens have failed. I will only say that if, during your stay at Darjeeling, you shall see but one sunrise on those everlasting hills, your keenest artistic sense will be satisfied beyond all expectation; but if, as often happens, the heavens are froward, if clouds surge like a sea of foam over the mountains and valleys, and the sun himself cannot pierce the black veil of the sky, then your disappointment will be more poignant than tongue can tell.

But the tribes of Asia are ever with us, chattering and bargaining and laughing in the picturesque market-place—a constant yet surprising joy. The bazaar reminds one, by reason of its irregularity and dirt, of a Central Asian town, and the illusion is maintained by the appearance of its inhabitants. There are Chinamen, silent and business-like, standing at the doors of their shops and ready to trade with all men in all things. There are Tibetans wandering about with their pack-mules laden with manufactures from that far country beyond the hills. Lepchas, Bhutias, and Bhutanese are there, Lamas from the neighbouring temples, Nepaulese, and Merwaris from India proper—a human kaleidoscope whose fascination never fails, however long one gazes at it.

The chief object of interest, during my last visit to Darjeeling, was the Tashi Lama, who happened to be passing through on his way to India to meet the Prince of Wales. Great was the



THE TASHI LAMA AND HIS COUNCIL



THE TASHI LAMA'S DWARF

excitement amongst the Buddhist community at the progress of this being, whom they worship as a divinity, but upon whose features none of them had ever gazed before. He seemed a gentle little person, quiet and unassuming, with large gold-rimmed spectacles, almost lost amid his enormous following of wild retainers — to say nothing of his distinguished aunt, his multitude of councillors, and the dwarf who was popularly supposed to bring luck to the whole party. All of these underwent the operation of photography with their traditional fortitude; and I am now the proud possessor of a large collection of their photographs, the first taken upon British soil. A missionary friend was good enough to introduce me to several of the Tibetan gentlemen of rank, and to interpret for me when conversing with Lamas and others, many of whom fought against us in the recent expedition, but are now inclined to live with us in perfect amity. "That war was largely our fault," said one of them to me: "when a strange dog comes to my door I drive him back the first time; but, when he keeps coming and seems inclined to be peaceable, I feed him and soon we get quite intimate and friendly. That is how we should have dealt with the English." Their costumes were very picturesque, though they were anything but clean. The chiefs of the company usually dress in Chinese fashion with slight modifications, but the multitude are in blankets or "poshteens," bordered with

tiger or panther skins, and heavily girt with sword, dagger, and chains. All have jewellery round their necks and in their ears, on their fingers and fastened to their clothes. They were a most orderly good-natured crowd, anxious to be on the best of terms with their neighbours, and apparently bearing no resentment whatever against their late enemies, the British.

The original inhabitants of Lower Sikkim are rarely found in Darjeeling; indeed a Lepcha man is scarcely anywhere to be seen until one rides out into the surrounding country. They have been bought out of house and home by the Nepaulese and Merwaris for quite inadequate sums of ready money, and Darjeeling is thus deprived of the presence of a very interesting and amiable race. Their morals are considerably better than those of their neighbours—of polyandry there is none, and polygamy is practised only by the red-capped sect. They are always smiling, humorous, and polite; they are honest and very hard-working. Curiously enough, they are enthusiasts for vaccination, and will go any distance to be thus rendered immune from small-pox, a disease which they fear even more than death itself.

Far more numerous than these are the Bhutanese, who figure chiefly as hewers of wood, drawers of water, and beasts of burden for the rest of the population in and about Darjeeling. It is marvellous to see the tre-



BHUTANESE COOLIES



BHUTIA LADIES

mendous weights that their women can carry up the steepest hills, whether it be Saratoga trunks from the railway station or huge blocks of stone from the quarries. They, too, are laden with jewellery—turquoise earrings, silver amulets, and golden charms—which glisten strangely upon their drab woollen robes as they stagger uphill with their loads. But there is no sentiment attached to these ornaments, and the tourist is followed at every turn by men and women both ready and anxious to exchange their jewels for the rupee of commerce. Many and curious were the articles that they produced out of the folds of their voluminous garments: prayer-wheels, rings, daggers, teapots, are extracted with bewildering rapidity out of the same receptacle, and the transaction of haggling is accompanied with so much good-humoured banter amongst the competing salesmen, that bargaining becomes a positive pleasure.

Then there are the Bhutia tribes, hailing from Tibet and Sikkim, in whose features can still be seen some trace of their land of origin. But they have long intermarried freely, and only experts in ethnology can differentiate them at a glance. Their clothes are less sombre than those of their colleagues from Bhutan, for the women wear white shirts and striped petticoats adorned with ornaments of every description. Of the Merwaris I need not speak here, as they belong to the plains of India, and have neither the splendid

independence nor the engaging characteristics of the hill tribes with which I am dealing.

The Nepaulese, on the other hand, merit a word of passing remark, since they are invading British Sikkim in force, and are now about 75 per cent. of the population. They are employed largely on the tea plantations, and, being far more methodical than the other hill tribes, and frugal livers to boot, they never lack employment, but are welcomed by all to pursue those industries and domestic occupations for which their neighbours have no taste.

No further description of the resident Tibetans is necessary, since they so closely resemble the Tashi Lama's following, of which I have already said something. They are, on the whole, very quiet and peaceable in British territory; and, with their caravans of yaks and ponies and goats, add much to the vivacity and picturesqueness of the bazaar during the cold weather season.

All these races profess a religion which is Buddhistic in the main, though it is deeply tinged with Hinduism and Demonolatry. There is amongst them little of the personal morality which Gaudama taught, and none of the sober rules of living which he impressed upon his followers. On the contrary, the taking of life is nothing to them; they will eat meat of any kind, and drink whatever spirits are put before them. Of course, one can understand this modification of the Buddhist dietary regulations, since

the climatic conditions of the Himalayas are so different to those of the warmer zone whence the original edicts were issued. Nevertheless, I asked a leading Buddhist of Tibet what sanction there was for this deviation, and he told me a legend of centuries ago: that a disciple of Gaudama was shocked to find his followers eating human flesh in the snowy regions of Tibet, and when he was informed that they could not keep warm otherwise, he sanctioned the consumption of "the flesh of large animals," and of stimulants in small quantities.

To the outward forms of their religion they pay considerable attention, and they are to be found in large numbers in their temples at stated hours during the day. Their worship is accompanied by a great deal of noise; the beating of drums, braying of shawms, and blowing of conches are inseparable from their devotions; and, during the operations of this choir of cacophony, the Law is chanted monotonously by the head Lama, and the faithful make their prayer-wheels revolve their orisons. The Lamas are highly respected all over the country—venerable old gentlemen and clever-looking young ones—who are not above working for their living and for the welfare of their temple. The head Lama has educational as well as priestly duties, and he undertakes the training of a certain number of disciples for the priesthood. The subordinate classes can print books, or make clothes,

or bake bread, thus showing another great difference between the Buddhism of Northern India and that of Burma, where "contemplation" is the only occupation compatible with priesthood. There is also, of course, the dancing class of Lama, which figures prominently in every religious festival. Draped in fearsome costumes and shrouded in grotesque masks, a band of these dancing Lamas is often to be seen performing their curious gyrations to the accompaniment of weird instruments and still stranger cries. The origin of these dances, so my informant told me, can be traced right back to the dark ages of Tibet, when there lived a king so morally depraved and tyrannical that all his subjects longed for his death. They took counsel accordingly with their wise men, who suggested that a band of Lamas should dress themselves as devils and dance into the king's presence with threats and execrations. And one of these was to conceal within his spacious sleeves an arrow and a bow. Audience was then granted by the hated monarch, and in the course of the ballet he was shot dead. This tradition is the authority for "devil-dancing," which is so interesting a feature of Tibetan worship.

Other tribes are sparsely represented at Darjeeling, such as the Mechis and the Limboes, but I have called attention to the most prominent of those who reside on our Tibetan frontier. That they all live in peace together within British terri-



AT A LAMASERY

tory must be laid equally to their credit and to that of British administration. Though there is competition, there is work for all, and a really poor person is a strange sight in that far hill-station. Their distinctive racial customs are encouraged by us, and their religious rites are scrupulously protected so long as they do not transgress those rules of humanity and civilisation which lie at the foundation of British rule. And as I left the Bazaar and zig-zagged seven thousand feet down the Himalayas in that wonderful mountain railway, through glorious scenery of forest and jungle and torrent, I could not but feel glad of belonging to a race whose genius for tribe-government has been so successful in spreading the light of contentment, industry, and peace.

XIV

THE BOMBAY MILLS

THE industrial awakening of the East is so real, and so evidently a factor to be seriously reckoned with in an intelligent forecast of the future balance of trade-power, that we can understand its designation as a Yellow Peril to the workshops of the West. In Bombay the dawn of a new day is already past, for the sun of industrial freedom is now high above the horizon, and the darkest clouds of the toilers' night are gone for ever. The spirit of combination is abroad, on the coast of the Indian Ocean as on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, and the boldest of us will not foretell the direction of its path nor the extent of its power. Of late Bombay has been the theatre of a tremendous industrial revolution, bloodless, constitutional, and, up to a point, effective. Capital has capitulated to the cry of suffering humanity, and the mill-hands of this prosperous and important city are no longer in bondage.

On the morning of September 13, 1905, Bombay was shaken to its moral foundations by the appearance of an article in *The Times of India*, written with every sign of knowledge and authority, and headed "Bombay's Slaves." It

told a gruesome story in seven columns of print —a story of suffering unheeded, of inspection neglected, of profits incalculable earned by sweating and illegality; a story which has never been contradicted in gross or in detail, for it was known to be the accurate outcome of laborious and conscientious personal investigation by a perfectly impartial English gentleman. And in this way Bombay became aware that situated in her midst were some eighty cotton mills, employing over 100,000 adult hands, which used to work only during the hours of daylight. But the enterprise of certain mill-owners introduced the electric light into forty of these mills, thus enabling work to begin before sunrise and to continue until long after sunset. From 5 A.M. until 8 P.M. became the normal working hours of the majority of these establishments; and so greatly was the out-turn thus increased that orders for electric installations were quickly issued by the less progressive firms. Fifteen hours a day of textile industry in the tropics, in an atmosphere of gaseous sewage! Well might Mr. Proctor, in his speech to the Bombay mill-owners, say, "To swell your profits you are ready to sink all feelings of humanity and to sweat your mill-hands to any extent," a view nobly seconded by Mr. Bomonji Dinshaw Petit upon the same occasion: "I deliberately assert that every additional pound of production got by making your hands work longer than twelve hours a day is wrung out of their aching limbs."

It was further discovered that the provisions enacted for regulating child-labour were systematically set at naught; that children, whose hours of labour should not have exceeded seven, were being practically slave-driven for God knows how many hours a day, and hidden away under sacks or in dark corners during the inspector's visits; that many a child under fourteen could be impersonated by an "adult" and registered as such, and that physical fitness for factory life was neither exacted nor desired.

It needed no pressure from Lancashire to amend this condition of things, for the conscience of civilised Bombay dealt promptly with its own scandal. One by one the mill-owners declared that they would shorten the period of labour to twelve hours a day, and their Association finally braced itself to a corporate resolution to work those hours until December 1, 1905. They had but one doubt, namely, whether their men would care to accept less wages as a consequence of shorter hours. With one voice the men declared that they would.

The 1st of December resolution is now replaced by another of a more permanent character, which binds the Bombay Association to a maximum day of thirteen hours, and which appears to satisfy all parties as a reasonable arrangement. It must be remembered, by those who do not know the conditions of Indian labour, that such a working day does not imply thirteen hours of continuous exer-

tion, such as we can see at any Lancashire mill: there are frequent intervals for food and smoking and washing, unknown in the strenuous life of European factories, which lead the best experts to the conclusion that a thirteen hours' day of comparatively leisurely labour, although a maximum day, is not inconsistent with the health or well-being of the workers. This is the beginning of the story of the emancipation of the adult slaves of Bombay.

But there are other considerations and other slaves whose case is urgent and must be immediately dealt with. There is first of all the question of the pay of the Bombay mill-hands, which has not, I understand, fluctuated since the industry was in its darkest stages of youthful depression. That industry is now phenomenally prosperous, and the old policy of low pay will be worthy of an ostrich if it is blindly adhered to in wilful heedlessness of the dangers which surround it.

Then there is the case of other mills in the mofussil outside Bombay, up-country, and even in Calcutta itself: nobody denies that scandals of the same kind are rife, though they have not yet been exposed in these places. With regard to them, the Bombay masters complain, with some show of reason, that they should not be bound to shorter hours and to special factory enactments whilst their competitors are unfettered in these directions. And this is true enough. It is high time that these matters should be dealt with by

the Government of India, with Indian opinion at its back—that child-labour should be properly regulated and decently overseen, that physical fitness should be a *sine quâ non* for registration, and that slave-drivers should be broken on the wheel. And here it may be well to state explicitly that considerable surprise was evinced in India amongst those who feel most keenly for her industrial future, but who have no direct concern in it, that the recent Bill introduced for the amendment of the Indian Factory Act contained no sign of appreciation that the time was ripe for such legislation as I have indicated. The Minister in charge made no allusion to the significance of the Bombay exposures, let fall no hint that he was conscious of an awakened public opinion, although I understand that he has subsequently taken steps to prepare for action. The Government of India will do well to act at once for the sake of its own reputation for statesmanship, and in the interests of Indian trade. For, if they wait until external pressure is exerted through the India Office, it is not to be anticipated that the consequent enactments will benefit Indian so much as English commerce.

This leads me to say a word upon the intervention of Lancashire in this agitation, which is purely domestic in its essence. Rightly or wrongly, people in Bombay hold the strong opinion that the Lancashire operative cannot be single-minded in this matter, and that his advice to the

Secretary of State is tainted by self-interest. The continuance of the Excise duty upon piece-goods made in India, insisted upon by Manchester and Oldham, rankles deeply; and further interference with the conditions of labour, prompted by the same power, will be as deeply resented. Like other countries at other times, India prefers to work out her own salvation. The effect of the recent exposures, moreover, leads us to believe that this both can and will be done within a very short time. The capitalist has recognised his failing, and the operative his power; forces, irresistible in their nature, are at work to bring the conditions of labour in India into line with those at home, and what they have already in part accomplished they will soon achieve in full. As in the physical body, so in the body politic it is healthiest to trust Nature in the first instance to right the wrongs of her own system; and only if she fails, to call in the physician from without. So Lancashire will be wise, if her motives are purely humanitarian, to watch the course of events in India; and, if India finds that her power of pressure is not sufficient to extract industrial reform, to respond with cheerfulness and vigour to the cry that will go out from Bombay, "Come over and help us."

And surely the developments which Bombay has witnessed must have their lesson for the Labour leaders at home, whose power in the present Parliament cannot be gainsaid. Hitherto

the West, with all its advantages, has been competing against the ignorant, idle, thriftless, disintegrated East. But the workman who arrives from England upon the shores of Bombay will observe the overhanging cloud of smoke and a forest of factory chimneys that will demand his instant attention and reflection. He will hear, on landing, the story of the emancipation of the slaves as I have told it, and he will notice the birth of co-operation and combination amongst the working classes. He will read of the efforts which are now being put forth to improve the quality of Indian labour by inculcating the importance of work and thrift and time. He will realise that labour is very cheap and that raw material is at the door; and he will be informed that what he sees of mills in India is already visible on the Yangtze River and in Japan, and is capable of indefinite expansion.

To what conclusion should these phenomena lead him? Surely to a belief that the time is coming when, by purely natural processes, his trade in piece-goods will be seriously threatened by countries which facilitate the employment of capital by the co-operation of cheap labour, and which see the folly of driving the employer to foreign lands where the demands of labour are not out of all proportion to the possibilities of the market. Three things are now abundantly clear: that the East is patient and anxious to learn from the West; that there is an almost illimitable scope

for the employment of capital in the cultivation of raw material and the establishment of factories in India and China; that, at present, the British workman can more than hold his own with any nationality in the textile trades. But for how long will he retain his supremacy? The answer lies with the labourer and his leader—these two alone.[1]

[1] Since the foregoing chapter was written, a small committee has been appointed and is now sitting at Bombay, under the presidency of Commander Sir Henry Freer-Smith, R.N. Five specific points have been referred to them for investigation: the working hours of adult males, the physical fitness and minimum age of children employed in mills, the question of the possible creation of a special class of workers known as "young persons," and the system of medical inspection. Their inquiries are of a preliminary character, and if they can establish the existence of abuses, then the whole subject will be referred to a larger Commission for examination before any far-reaching changes in the present Factory Laws are made.

XV

THREE NATIVE CAPITALS

THE following sketches, and they have no larger pretension, may give some idea of life and character in Native States other than those which I have already described at somewhat greater length. All three of these capitals — Udaipur, Indore, and Patiala—are exceedingly interesting, each from a different point of view.

I

UDAIPUR

Of the three, Udaipur is incomparably the most beautiful; perhaps it is the most lovely of all the cities of India. It is best approached from Ajmere, *via* Chitor, whose striking fortress stands high upon the hills overlooking the railway. I should certainly advise every traveller who can spare the time so to arrange that he shall have an elephant waiting at the station, to convey him up the long ascent which leads to this famous city which was once the capital of Mewar. The summit of the hill is covered with traces of palaces and temples, now, alas, in ruins, which bear witness to the past glories of Chitor, whose

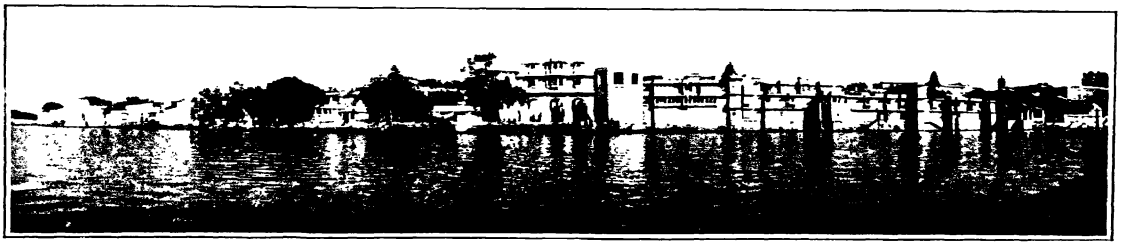
martial memories are still treasured in the heart of every true Rajput.

From Chitor a branch line now runs down to Udaipur, a distance of about seventy miles, which one used to have to cover by "tonga" service. At the station itself there is always considerable animation, a feast of colour, and a riot of indescribable varieties of sound. The city proper is some three miles from the railway, and driving thither we have to pass the famous burying places of the kings of Mewar—a race of sacred personages which combines the function of High Priesthood with the family distinction of being direct descendants of the Sun. This cemetery lies within a small compound, overgrown with trees and semi-tropical vegetation, and overrun by a fascinating breed of monkeys. It contains a large number of Hindu monuments which once were magnificent, but now they are crumbling, dilapidated, and uncared for; yet in these forgotten shrines we can still detect the richness of the early carving and observe the dignity of design as we mount to them by broad flights of stone steps now worn by the ravages of weather and neglect. Once a year its solitude is disturbed by the state visit of the Maharana to the tombs of his ancestors; but the general aspect of the place is one of pathetic desolation and despair.

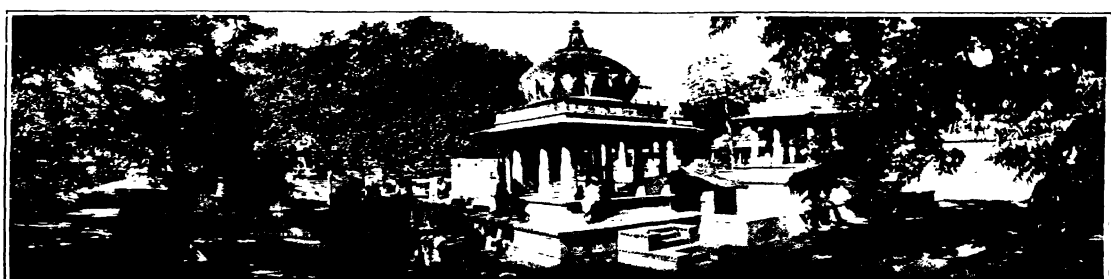
A mile further on the beautiful fortress palace is seen, shining white upon the horizon, a fitting guardian of the fairy lake beyond. By the kind-

ness of the Maharana a boat was put at our disposal, and we spent a memorable afternoon exploring the wonders of Udaipur. I know of no description that is adequate even faintly to present the beauties of the Pichola Lake to those who have never seen it—a reflection which warns me to refrain from inviting failure in attempting so difficult a task. Sufficient, then, to say that as one proceeds from the landing ghat in the humblest quarter of the town, to the other end of the river where stands the palace overhanging the lake, the journey is one of surpassing beauty. Upon either side stand native residences, some palatial and others picturesque, in their luxuriant gardens which ramble down to the water's edge, where the populace, in gay attire, assembles at stated hours to bathe and pray. Passing out into the broad highway of the lake itself, the scene becomes yet more entrancing as the blue surrounding hills come into view and the royal sun illuminates the many island palaces which, like pure white lilies in their green cups of foliage, jewel the expanse of water.

At the far end of the lake, so far away that the palace looks like a tiny Walhalla in the clouds, there is a rugged building which does duty for a hunting-box. It faces out toward the hills which bound the Bhil country, and from it the wild boar are fed every afternoon. It was a curious sight to see hundreds of these animals assembling from far and near in anticipation of



UDAIPUR: THE PALACE FROM THE LAKE



THE BURYING-PLACE OF KINGS

the evening meal of grain which is flung to them from the ramparts upon which we stood. Galloping, grunting, screaming, fighting, they provided us with entertainment for quite an hour, until it was sunset. By this time the sky was of a cloudless amber, the lake had turned to palest green, the marble palaces shone like diamonds set in jade, in the distance and on high the grand old Rajput fortress gleamed gold in the evening light; under these conditions of ethereal beauty and perfect silence, unbroken save by the plashing of the oars upon the water, we gained a wonderful impression of the almost unearthly beauty of Udaipur. On the following day I was fortunate enough to see something of the palace from within. Its size and its situation are its chief recommendations, for its architecture is not particularly noteworthy. In the palace-yard are generally a few elephants swallowing grass by the hundredweight, a number of horses being lunged, some cattle loitering, and a crowd of retainers and litigants doing nothing in particular. This was the first scene that greeted us on our way to visit the Maharana in his palace. Then we proceeded up a flight of marble steps into a dingy narrow passage, and, after stumbling over a mountain of cast-off shoes, found ourselves in a somewhat tumble-down courtyard, where petitioners and servants and "hangers-on" were patiently assembled. Then up more dark staircases, and through winding corridors, into

a lovely little cloistered quadrangle, cool with fountains and orange trees, round whose tessellated pavement sat the nobles of the state, resplendent in their scarlet and white or purple tunics, with sword and dagger pendant. They were waiting to pay their daily duty to their lord—playing cards and drinking coffee the while. As we approached they all rose and salaamed gravely; we in turn saluted them. Then we were conducted down a couple of steep stairs, and, with a sudden turn to the right, behold "the presence." He was in his "Diwan-i-Khas" —just such another in plan as those at Agra and Delhi—a long narrow open court, its marble roof supported by arches and graceful pillars. Upon either side stood nobles and courtiers, sword in hand, and, at the end of this pavilion, the Maharana was waiting. He was dressed in a dove-coloured coat, wearing a red Rajput turban, whence sprung an aigrette brooched by a diamond; round his neck a chain of enamel and ruby; at his waist a jewelled girdle, a gold-hilted dagger, and a jade-headed sword gleaming with precious stones —a striking picture of mediæval nobility. He rose from his seat—chairs were used for this occasion only—and quietly greeted us. A little pale-faced man, with receding forehead and bearded chin; eyes that flashed but never settled; hands expressive but never still. His voice was husky, his manner polite, but his bearing seemed restless and uneasy. We entered into a short conversa-

tion of the usual complimentary and uninforming character, in which I tried to express my thanks for his hospitality, and he offered to do all in his power to make our stay in his capital agreeable, and then the interview closed. Thence to his armoury, where the sword and the chain armour of Pertab Singh, the Rajput divinity, the turban of the Emperor Shah Jehan, and a number of other valuable relics of ancient days are stored. The swords and shields were, for the most part, splendid specimens of the armourer's art, engraved on hilt and blade and scabbard, and encrusted with gems, or inlaid with gold upon silver or ivory.

In the afternoon I received a complimentary visit from the two Prime Ministers—the theory being that, in this land of diplomacy, the one should be set as a guard upon the ambitions of the other! The elder, a wizened little old man of sixty-five, took small part in the conversation, which was carried on mainly between the younger official and myself. He explained to me the apportionment of work between the three members of council, who do all the clerkly business of the State: after which he explained that their decisions go up to the Prime Ministers, who, in turn, take everything to the Chief, who insists on being made cognisant of every detail of administration; but, as he constantly absents himself on sporting expeditions for weeks at a time, the affairs of State are occasionally in arrears.

Then we started off to visit the State gaol, a fine building with good sanitation and an excellent water supply, all instituted and superintended by the Residency Surgeon, who is always *ex-officio* Inspector of the gaol. The state of the law and the discrimination of the judges is not, however, so apparent as the European arrangements, for the most absurd penalties are awarded for the paltriest crimes; prisoners awaiting trial are fettered and herded with the already condemned; many are still awaiting trial after three years of imprisonment. But, worst of all, is the insane habit of locking up small boy misdemeanants with hardened malefactors; it is heart-breaking to see them working in the same gangs, feeding in the same sheds, and consorting with the same dregs of the criminal classes all day long. Notwithstanding their tender years, many of them have very long terms of imprisonment given them; some have been implicated in dacoities at about fifteen years of age and have got life sentences; others, for theft, have ten or seven years. The birch rod is unknown, as it is against the Hindu religion to administer corporal punishment to children—another instance of the truth of the proverb that sparing the rod may spoil the child.

We then went to the State hospital: as clean as the European doctor could make it, but situated in the densest quarter of the Bazaar. People thronged to its dispensary, where medicines are issued *gratis;* patients bring their wives and

families to live in the wards with them; there is a recognised "right-of-way" for the general public to pass through the hospital courtyard, and a conscientious objection to anything like fresh air on the part of all invalids. In the middle of this crowding and noxious atmosphere the surgeon swings along in his shirt-sleeves, with attendants bearing knives and a basin of disinfectants behind him; now scolding some recalcitrant, now encouraging a dying sepoy, stopping to operate upon a patient stretched out upon a table in the verandah, then pulling out a tooth, and finally disappearing into a little darkened room to remove a cataract. It was a good wholesome sight among so much squalor. "I must work with what I've got," he says; "if I wait till the accessories are perfect all these people will be dead."

Collectors of armour will enjoy themselves in Udaipur, and connoisseurs may still pick up pieces of considerable antiquity and value. The arrival of a European visitor in the city seems to be communicated in some mysterious way to all the merchants of this particular commodity, and I well remember the brave show which their wares afforded when spread out upon the verandah of our residence. Swords, knives, and daggers; chain armour, shields, and helmets; Bhil bows and arrows, and jezails in tempting array. While we were bargaining, an amusing incident occurred, which might have ended more seriously. My

companion, who had already heard much of the Bhils, was anxious to see (and to photograph) one in his native attire. Thereupon, from a neighbouring garden, the complaisant merchant summoned a servant, who duly arrived—wondering why he had been sent for. We told him we were anxious to see how the Bhils committed highway robbery; he grinned all over, and pulled the tail of his puggaree across his face as if preparing to escape detection.

"Suppose now," said my friend to him, "that one of these merchants (pointing to the unsuspecting vendors of arms) gave you your opportunity, what would you do?"

The words were hardly out of his mouth before the Bhil (who had brought his bow and arrows with him) charged a Bunnia in the pit of the stomach, struck him on the side of the head, wrenched off his money-bag, and, dropping on one knee, aimed an arrow (but did not shoot) at him! The whole manœuvre passed before our eyes like a flash of lightning. The rage of the merchant, when he had recovered his breath, knew no bounds; nothing but the laughter of his companions and the incontrollable merriment of the Bhil himself convinced him that the whole thing was intended for a joke; then, being fully satisfied that no harm was intended to his opulent person, he at once consented to be photographed with his erstwhile assailant.

II

INDORE

The Residency at Indore is one of the largest and most comfortable Government Houses in India, and its chief *agrément* is a delightful little river, bordered by banks of tropical foliage and tall date palms, which runs through the gardens. Here it was my good fortune to stay for a few days, and, as there is little to differentiate the streets from those of most native cities, I spent most of my time in the various establishments which are conducted by the representatives of the Maharajah Holkar, whose eccentricities and general conduct led to his abdication a few years ago. Amongst other institutions I visited the gaol, a comfortable and commodious-looking building, just suited to the requirements of the ordinary Hindu criminal—a place where he can rest on his haunches all day and do nothing for as long as he chooses. In other native gaols there seemed to be plenty of employment for the inmates, but here there was not nearly enough work for them; it was not surprising, therefore, to learn that they all preferred the "extra-mural" services of gardening and road-making (in fetters), both of which occupations appeared to be comparatively popular. In this penitentiary the women were incarcerated in an isolated building; there were only five at the time of my visit, all of

them detained for husband-murder; and juveniles are in a third building, to keep them segregated from adult professors of crime.

The hospital I thought as "up-to-date" as the gaol was antiquated. It was splendidly equipped with all the latest appliances in the way of operating tables, instruments, &c.; the beds were clean, there was abundance of light and air, and the patients looked both healthy and happy. The life and soul of this institution was a keen young Irishman whom everybody seemed to worship, and through whose energy and enthusiasm an admirable medical school has been started, to the great benefit of the inhabitants of the city and neighbourhood. Of the Daly College for the nobility of Central India I could say little that was complimentary at the time when I visited it; but it has taken a new lease of life, and everything now points to its brilliant prospects as one of the three or four recognised training-grounds for young Indian gentlemen who mean to devote themselves to the public services of their country in the future.

The Imperial Opium Agency at Indore is another of the places which is well worth seeing, a kind of Customs House where the opium is weighed. It arrives in boxes—two hampers count as one official box—and, as each box is opened, about two hundred balls (the size of croquet balls) roll out on to a sheet in the sawdust in which they have been packed. They are then weighed

to the fraction of an ounce; if the box is a grain too heavy or too light it must be adjusted to the Government measure; sometimes a mere chip off one ball is sent back to the dealer as being the excess weight. On each box (which is sold for Rs. 1300) Government takes a toll of Rs. 300, and the State takes Rs. 300, leaving only a return of Rs. 700 on each box for the dealer, nothing very excessive, but I am told that the crop is an easy one to grow.

I was very much struck with the opportunities for education with which Indore seems to be provided. Besides the Daly College, to which I have already alluded, there is an excellent institution called Holkar's College, at which boys of every degree may fit themselves for a life of usefulness. Students from every part of the State attend its courses, all of them anxious to work, and many of them exceedingly poor—so poor that they are lodged and fed at the expense of Government. Whether this is the best of all possible plans may be a moot point, but it is certain that full advantage is taken of the exceptional opportunities for learning which are thus brought within the reach of every native subject of the State, whether in the lecture rooms or laboratories or gymnasium; whilst the general rule that, in matters of discipline and internal management, the students shall govern themselves, has the beneficial result of inculcating responsibility upon the seniors and obedience upon subordinates at

an age when, in Asia as in Europe, such lessons have a very determining effect upon character in later life. In the town itself are the Government Schools, which are "primary" in curriculum. The pupils range between the ages of seven and seventeen, and are divided into "Upper" and "Lower" School. The elder boys learn all their lessons in English, and it is surprising to notice how fluently they can read and speak it. What is more, they understand it remarkably well, as I found when examining them on the meaning of some allusions in Gray's "Elegy," which they happened to be reading when I was taken into the class-room. From these schools Holkar's College draws most of its pupils, and they (the Government Schools) are fed from the "Vernacular" establishments for little boys who know no English, and learn all their earliest lessons in their own language.

Like other States, Indore has its Imperial Service troops, which, at the time when I saw them on parade, were by no means as smart as could be wished. There was even a talk of transforming them into a Transport Corps, as has been done in similar cases, but there seemed to be strong arguments against taking such a step. After all, there is no compulsion upon the State to force it to provide these regiments for the British Government; they are offered and accepted without pressure and without reserve. The question of efficiency, like so many other things,

turns upon questions of money; the inadequacy of the pay was at the root of the whole difficulty, since it was insufficient to attract the best officers or to buy the best horses.

Finally, before leaving Indore, I must say a word about a short visit to the native quarters, through which I was guided by the Maharajah's private secretary in a commodious barouche. We were accompanied by a small escort of cavalry, and drove for quite a long time through a maze of narrow streets of the ordinary native kind, past houses of every shade of colour, with delicately carved balconies and curiously fretted windows of charming design, reared over shops whose shimmering wares of silk and silver and brass lay dazzling in the sun. There seemed to be quite an unusual number of people in the streets, and constantly we met bands of music escorting small crowds who surrounded a central figure (ludicrously overdressed) upon a horse. These were generally moving towards some house or marquee whereat was assembled a throng of brilliantly robed merchants with their families, a bright little knot of nautch-girls, and an interested gathering of friends, all intent upon some impending festivity. It transpired, upon inquiry, that these processions were connected with the Hindu marriage rite; and that this particular event, which kept every thoroughfare in a ferment of excitement, was the ceremonial visit of the bridegroom to the parents of the bride. He

might be a mere child of twelve years old, unlikely to see his wife again for many a long day; but from this date she becomes his legal spouse. The beauty of these gatherings would have been quite enough to arrest the attention of a traveller, but I was especially astonished at the epidemic of matrimony which seemed to have fastened upon Indore on this particular day, and I ventured to tax the Vakil with having arranged these weddings for my personal gratification. To my surprise, he solemnly assured me that he had not done exactly that; but that, being the official to whom the people had to apply for leave to process through the town, and this being the season for marriages, he had given an extra number of permits for this particular afternoon so that I might enjoy seeing the populace in holiday attire.

III

PATIALA

For many years past Patiala has rejoiced in having a unique reputation, even in India, for hospitality and good-fellowship towards Englishmen. It gives to them the best of polo, the finest of sport, and the warmest of welcomes. My own experience enables me to endorse that reputation in every particular, arriving as I did under the ægis of two most popular members of the Indian Civil Service, then stationed in



H.H. THE MAHARAJAH OF PATIALA

the capital, and enjoying the friendship of the Maharajah's uncle, whom I had previously met in Calcutta.

The kindness of the Council of Regency (who officiate for the young ruler during his minority) began at Rajpura railway station, where I found a splendid barouche and four grey horses to take me to Patiala. It was a sixteen-mile drive along a very good road, and the whole distance was covered (at a hand gallop) in sixty-five minutes. At my friend's house I found three charming old gentlemen (the Council) waiting to greet me, and, during the morning, I was fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of several of the leading officials in this important Sikh State. Later in the afternoon the young Maharajah came round with his tutor and invited me to go to the palace on the following day for a Durbar, which was to be held in my honour. He was a splendid little fellow when I first saw him (four years ago), and seemed likely to uphold the reputation of his family for cheeriness and love of manly sports. This first impression was fully justified when I subsequently paid him a visit at Lahore in 1906; he was then studying at the Aitcheson College, and was already most popular among his fellows, and one of the best all-round athletes in the school. The next morning, after a review of the Imperial Service troops by the General—a truly magnificent spectacle—I was called for by the Foreign Minister, and, together with him

and my friend Major Popham Young, proceeded in state to the scene of the Durbar. After driving through numberless quaint little bazaars we reached the Fort, whose courtyard was filled with a nondescript crowd of retainers in every conceivable kind of costume. In one corner was a guard of honour; in another a native band played Indian martial airs. Two elephants with silver howdahs and trappings of gold and scarlet were in attendance on the right; a splendid palanquin borne by gorgeously liveried servants was in waiting on the left. Such aids to progress seemed unnecessary, however, so we walked up the terrace through an avenue of clerks and officials in uniform, until we reached the Hall, where I was received by the Maharajah and his uncle and the Ministers of State in glorious attire. There a solemn procession was formed, and we marched in couples to a daïs upon which we sat and exchanged compliments of a most effusive character. I was a Member of Parliament in England at the time, and was assured that this Durbar was held to prove how greatly the Sikhs appreciated the presence in Patiala of any person connected with that venerable assembly. My reply was, I trust, equally courteous, though its tenor has escaped my memory. The next feature was the arrival of a long file of officials bearing trays full of jewels, which were spread out in front of me; these were gifts (in theory), but (in practice) it is etiquette to touch each tray and return

it to the safe keeping of its custodian. One present, however, was given me as a souvenir of the occasion, by the Council—a very handsome green and gold turban—which I am more than proud to possess. After the removal of the jewels we reached the final act in this interesting ceremony. A servant approached the Maharajah with a tiny ladle and a silver bowl, out of which a spoonful of some very powerful perfume was sprinkled on to my handkerchief. I was then given a piece of betel-nut wrapped in gold leaf, and with these tokens of lasting friendship the Durbar was closed. Before leaving we spent a long time inspecting the family jewels of Patiala —beautifully carved emeralds of enormous size, ropes of pearls, ruby necklaces, and I know not how many magnificent ornaments to be worn in the turban. Then, with many protestations of good-will, we parted; and I returned in yet more gorgeous state to my friends. This time it was upon an elephant magnificently caparisoned. His saddle-cloth of purple and gold was spread from head to tail and reached to his knees. Behind his ears he wore silver shields, besides carrying huge gold earrings, a massive silver tiara bound across his brow, and large anklets and chains of pure gold. Above all this display was a silver and scarlet howdah, in which my companion and I sat with servants holding jewelled umbrellas over us. Another elephant followed, and thus, with a brave escort of Lancers, we progressed,

through streets thronged with a puzzled populace, to the place from whence we had come.

It is, of course, impossible that the recipient of so graceful a courtesy could ever think of Patiala otherwise than with gratitude. But, the Durbar apart, I have such delightful recollections of each visit that I paid to that old-world capital; I remember with so much affection the simplicity and manliness of all classes that I have met there, the exceeding beauty of its gardens, the unfailing kindness of my English hosts, that I should consider no tour in India complete unless it included yet another sojourn in the capital of Bhupindra Singh.

XVI

THE KOLAR GOLD-FIELDS

EXPERTS and shareholders are respectfully invited to leave this chapter severely alone. It makes no pretensions to detailed knowledge of the gold industry in general, and lays no claim to forecast the financial future of the "Indian Rand" in particular. It is but the narrative of a visit to a part of India little frequented by tourists, wherein lies a treasure that may be compared to the fabulous wealth of Golconda, and one whose industry maintains a population of about one hundred thousand British subjects. But those who have never seen a gold-mine in working may be interested, as I was, to follow the processes which lead to the circulation of that precious metal so necessary to our material well-being, and to learn something of the conditions under which our fellow-subjects live and work in a remote corner of the Indian Empire.

The journey thither from Bangalore takes about three hours, in a leisurely train and through scenery of no particular interest. As we approach the mines the land on both sides seems but an arid waste, until the small ridge of hills is traversed behind which lies the rich quartz-bearing district.

Then, suddenly, the face of the earth is transformed; and for nearly nine miles we pass through a continuous city of factories and workshops with their chimneys and shafts, their overhead rails, their branches of coolie lines, their barracks and their schools. There is little smoke and less dirt, for electricity is the universal power; but there is a loud and incessant roar from end to end of the district, proclaiming that the mills on every mine are very much alive. Each mine has its own railway station, and you may alight at Balaghat, Nundrydroog, Ooregum, Champion Reef, or Mysore, to spend your time in exploration of these gold-fields, which have already turned out twenty millions sterling into the pool universal of wealth.

I had formed the opinion, inaccurately enough no doubt, that life in townships which are raised above gold-reefs was one constant display of ostentation, of excess, of bad character, of high prices, and low living. But, if all gold-mining centres are managed in the same way as the Kolar Gold-Fields, these imaginings of mine must be written down as utterly erroneous, and their direct contrary may be more nearly accepted as the truth. For, had my experiences been limited to a casual survey of the huge engineering shops, the vast halls of machinery, the long streets of admirable cottages for coolies, the clubs, churches, hospitals and bungalows, the well-kept roads and electrically lighted streets, the luxuriant gardens and excellent water supply, I should have fancied

myself in the heart of a model city, depending for its happiness not upon the capricious bounty of a municipality (for there is none such in Kolar), but upon the public spirit and generosity of its citizens. Yet all this comfort and happiness, apparent upon every side, is the direct outcome of that industry concerning which so many hard things have been said; and I confess that I left this little *enclave* of prosperity in the Native State of Mysore feeling that, although gold may be the root of all evil in other parts of the world, it is the mainspring of comfort and contentment in every class which depends for its livelihood upon the management of the Kolar Gold-Fields.

Time is short, so let us find our friend at court (without whom any chance of visiting the mine is vain), and beg him to take us down into the bowels of the earth. He is busy in the manager's office; but with that charming *accueil* which is native in the breasts of Englishmen in far lands, and is ever ready for faces from "home," he leaves his desk and we set forth towards the shaft. To him this descent into the womb of the darkness is a matter of everyday occurrence, and he thinks no more of it than of sitting down to dinner. He even tempts Providence by laying out our plans for the afternoon "after we come up"; while I am wondering in my heart of hearts whether we ever shall come up, and am turning over in my mind the various accidents of which I have read as happening to those who go down to the deep

in lifts. And my trepidation is not calmed by the knowledge that the engineer who will control our journey is a native in receipt of a few rupees a week, who has been severely reprimanded a couple of hours ago! It might suit him to do something, or to leave something undone, which would supply the retort effective to his monitor, and land us in fragments at the bottom of the shaft. Luckily, however, the time is limited for these morbid meditations, and we are soon at the pit's mouth. A pink candle and a few matches are given to each of us as we step into the centre one of three sort of sentry-boxes (placed one on top of the other) which form the lift. Into each of these receptacles they usually stow six coolies; but I confess that I found two Europeans quite company enough in so confined an area.

Now we are off—not a jar at starting, but an imperceptible downward movement, which is far from disagreeable. Good-bye to the sun and the sky and the fair earth! all is darkness, and darker still; a sensation that one is being chloroformed out of one world with the consciousness of gradual translation into another. Slowly we pass one landing-stage on the way to the Inferno, and then a second, dimly perceiving shadows behind the grille as we descend; at last the motion ceases, and we step out two thousand feet below the sunshine. As my eyes become accustomed to the gloom, I perceive that we are standing in a lofty rock dungeon, fit abode for a state prisoner



TWO THOUSAND FEET BELOW THE EARTH

in the Middle Ages, where men are crawling about like busy ants in the pursuit of their various occupations. Lighting our candles, and leaving coats and waistcoats at the shaft, we proceed on our eerie promenade through this nether world. Our way lies toward a certain rock face half a mile distant, where a rich line of quartz has recently been struck. On and on through the lofty galleries upheld by a forest of sweating timber, through drives and cross-drives, walking more by faith than by sight; now we cling to the rock whilst a truck-load of quartz rattles past us over the rails on its road towards the upper air; now we stop for a rugged old Cornish foreman to hand in some report to his manager, or to "pass the time of day" with a clean-limbed young English "captain," who is going his rounds in the oldest and fewest of clothes. Now we strike a cleft in the rock, and, groping for the head of an iron ladder, feel our way gingerly down a hundred steps to a working on a lower face.

Peck, peck, peck, burr-r-r! What is that strange noise that harasses the silence of this livelong night? Then follows, from another quarter, a loud report which seems to shake the ground beneath our feet. The passage is filled for a moment with sulphurous fumes, and the air strikes hotter than ever; then in a few steps we reach the "face"—a veritable ant-hill of humming life—where a gang is clearing away the *débris* which has fallen from the explosion, and is filling the

trucks waiting in the rear. Then the rock-drill gets to work again: peck, peck, tap, tap, burr-r-r; it is driven by compressed air from somewhere in the land we have left, and bores and pierces its way into the stubborn rock until it has made room for another charge of dynamite; another explosion, another fall of auriferous quartz. Danger? yes, there is danger, as the hospital can tell you; but it would be reduced to a minimum if the native, who is a fatalist above all things, would but heed the safeguards provided by the employer. Deeper and deeper still, we penetrate to 3100 feet—this time in a long tin box meant for carrying quartz and tools. Here the heat is intense, as we stand almost on each other's shoulders waiting for the native engineer to lower us to the bottom of the mine. Yet even here there is air, hot but fresh, for the toilers by day and night who quarry and heap up riches, knowing not who shall gather them.

Now for the upward journey—to follow the rock that has just been blasted through the process which will transform it into bullion. At each stage in the ascent the air grows perceptibly cooler; waistcoat and coat are once more assumed and, though the thermometer registers 90° at the top of the shaft, there is a long blanket coat waiting for each of us as we reappear. There is also a long "peg" of whisky-and-soda, which flows like nectar down our parched throats!

At this point the reign of Chance is over, and

the iron rule of Science takes its place. There was something of romance in the vicissitudes of life in the Inferno; there is none in the relentless atmosphere of twentieth-century machinery. And so the quartz passes from the protecting care of its abysmal cradle into the merciless hand of man. From the pit's mouth it is carried to the topmost story of a tall wooden building, where stands a vast circular revolving table with a score of expert sorters around it. The contents of each truck are spilled on to this, and, as the table circulates, the pickers separate the valuable from the waste rock. Down one shoot falls the dross, while the remainder is cast between powerful crushers, which will reduce the largest pieces to a size that can be treated by the stamps. Next we go to the mills, whence proceeds the fierce roar to which I have already alluded. It is a roar as of mighty rushing waters, so loud that no man tries to speak inside the building; it is the song of the steel stamp as it grinds the quartz to powder all day and all night for seven days a week. The stamps are fed from above; and after their work is done, the powdered quartz, mixed with a stream of running water, flows out in a grey slime over large copper tables smeared with mercury, which arrests the gold and lets the slime pass away to another part of the field, to be dealt with by the cyanide process. Every morning at eight o'clock these tables are carefully scraped and cleaned. The quicksilver and gold are then collected and taken into an inner room, where

they are wrung through a piece of chamois leather until the contents of each table are concentrated into a small but heavy grey ball. Firing follows, to expel in fumes what remains of the quicksilver, and a brick of sponge-gold is left behind; then the gold is finally melted and run into solid bricks, which are despatched once a fortnight in trains, heavily insured and guarded, to Bombay, and so to London.

There remains the treatment of the grey slime which we left as it passed out of the mills. It is run into huge tanks, and gradually the water is drawn off, leaving a thick residuum of slate-coloured sand. Now you understand the meaning of the high hills of sand which are scattered over the fields of every mine; it is this residuum cleared out of the tanks and "weathering" in heaps—a process which takes a month or six weeks before being treated with cyanide. Then, when the sand is ready for treatment, it is carried (generally by women) to an enormous vat, into which a solution containing two per cent. of cyanide of potassium is admitted in order to dissolve the gold; thence it is drawn off and onward to a chamber where the gold is caught on zinc shavings, and the liquid passes out into the air. Thus, three pennyweights of gold to the ton of quartz is added to the credit of the mines.

And what of the lives of those who are thus engaged? Well, India is a land where grumbling has been reduced to a fine art; but I confess that

on the gold-fields I did not hear a single man find fault with his lot, though I had ample opportunity. There is a flourishing little community of 500 Europeans, 400 Eurasians, and 29,000 natives, all engaged upon the mines, with an estimated population of 100,000. The climate is so good, 3000 feet above the sea, that tropical scourges seldom reach them; the sanitation is excellent, and living is comparatively cheap. For the natives there are well-built huts in spacious streets, where a man can live with his family for tenpence a month; there are barracks for the British miners and bungalows for the superintendents, either free of charge or at a very low rental. There are schools for the children, thither driven daily in traps at the employers' expense, and a hospital which can boast the very best electrical appliances, the airiest wards, the best nurses, and the keenest doctors in India. Here the grim story of the deep can be read in all its piteous detail—a tale of mangled limbs, of sightless eyes, of fever and dysentery and the rest, but a tale also of sympathy and kindness—for the native in hospital gets free treatment and four annas a day as well as a monetary solatium if he loses a limb, while the European is admitted on full pay with free treatment until he recovers. Cholera occasionally appears, and sometimes small-pox; and for these there are segregation camps. It is interesting to note that the small-pox scourge (of which the native has a horror unequalled in

England), is gradually disappearing, since nearly every creature on the fields has been voluntarily vaccinated at least once since he joined the mines.

Then there are cricket and football clubs with a reputation that reaches far beyond Mysore; there is a fine golf-course, and a smart corps of Volunteers comprising one troop of Mounted Rifles, 600 Infantry, and there will soon be a Battery as well. Nor should I forget the Club, a spacious building with a fascinating bar, which is much frequented, and a circulating scientific library which is, perhaps, less popular. The Club is the centre of Kolar gaiety; and those who have been fortunate enough even to catch a glimpse of its fairer sex and to hear the strains of its band can well believe that life, in its gentler aspects, is cherished on the Gold-Fields as fondly as at home.

But no one will assert that existence is all play even on so model a field as Kolar. There must be trouble sometimes, and human nature will occasionally out. There are temptations of many kinds which beset the strongest and the weakest, the richest and the poorest employé on the mines. Considering that the native coolies are drawn from some of the least developed of the Indian races on the Malabar coast, it would be surprising if petty crime was not constantly attempted and sometimes successfully. Now and then a burglary, here and there an assault, oftentimes an abstraction of a morsel or more of rich quartz, very occasionally a theft of greater value. But a stalwart

force of Punjabi policemen is always on the alert, as sober, respectable, and trustworthy a body of men as you will meet between Cashmere and Tuticorin; and the consequently low percentage of crime in this neighbourhood must be most encouraging to the various companies concerned. There are other temptations to assail the superior population—of dealing in the share markets and the like. Yet I believe that since these companies were floated, there has never been a breath of suspicion directed against the name of a single man in high responsible employ upon the mines; and it may well be attributable to the example of their conduct that the native difficulties, rumours of which reach us from elsewhere, are so surely disappearing from Kolar.

To see such a splendid monument to British industry and enterprise reared in the heart of a sympathetic State is good indeed. We can point with pride to the harnessing of the Cauvery Falls, ninety-six miles away, which produces the electric power for all the machinery on the Gold-Fields; we can look with envy upon a model city provided with every necessity and many of the luxuries of modern life, as yet unoppressed by a single rate; but our highest praise remains for those who have flown the flag of clean living and straight dealing in a strange land, and have thus done their share to redeem the profession of gold-mining from the charges that have frequently been levelled against it.

PART II

BURMA

XVII

RANGOON

As the years roll by and travelling facilities increase, Burma is slowly dawning upon the "cold weather tourist" as a country worth visiting. Each season brings an increasing number of Western sightseers, all of whom fall easy victims to its beauty and its charm. These fascinating qualities have been hidden too long from a generation which is ever yearning for something new; but now that our galleries have exhibited pictures of Burma by artists like Mortimer Mempes, and our libraries contain such books as Mr. Nisbet's masterly work on Burma, "The Silken East," by Mr. Scott O'Connor, and Mr. Kelly's beautifully illustrated volume, there can be no doubt of Burma taking a foremost and a favourite place amongst those countries to which we repair to study people's politics and the picturesque.

Such introductions by pen and pencil are necessary for all new countries, and, as a white man's country, Burma is comparatively new. Yet, once effected, the acquaintance quickly ripens through friendship to real affection between the sympathetic traveller and the inhabitants of this iridescent land of the rainbow. But, if hitherto

comparatively unknown to tourists and sportsmen, Burma (especially the Lower Province) has long been known to the Government of India as a sure source of very large revenues, and for a still longer period it has supplied the pioneers of industry with considerable fortunes.

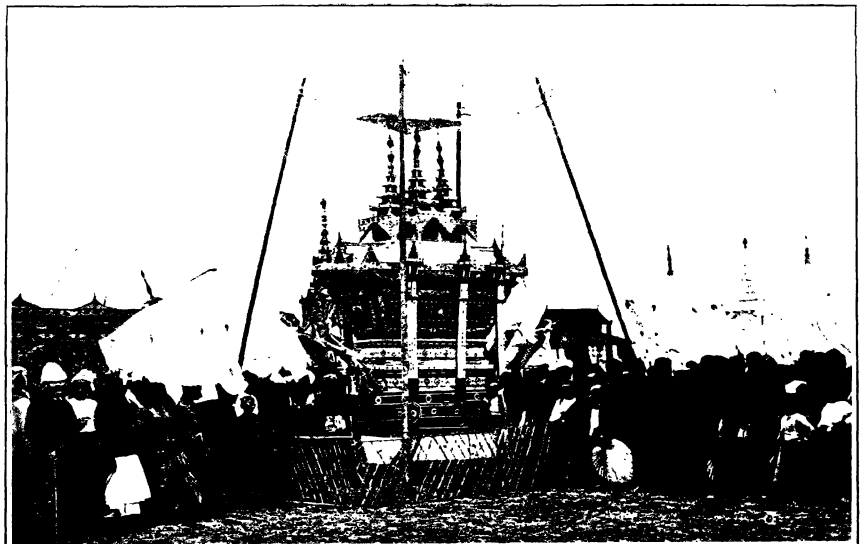
My companions on board ship tried hard to damp my expectant ardour. They said Rangoon was really nothing to see; no fine buildings, only lines of log cabins: they declared that the hotels were horrible and the food filthy. But the tourist within me was adamant; and when I saw the little shrine which marks the spot where the British troops first landed, the golden dome of the marvellous Shwè Dagon Pagoda gleaming like fire in the blue heaven, and the shore lined with the inhabitants dressed in every colour of the rainbow except blue, I knew that weeks of wonder and surprise were before me. No doubt Rangoon is not Manchester; nor, by the way, do its residents pay rates at ten shillings in the pound. The Port of Rangoon is not like the Port of London, nor is its river-side comparable to the Thames Embankment; there are no stately palaces and sumptuous hotels and asphalted streets, nor any of those signs of Western luxury which are already making their unwelcome appearance in most of the capitals of the Far East. I greatly prefer the clumps of palm trees, the cool and comfortable-looking Government offices, the spacious, if primitive, Strand Hotel, the long river-road rutted by the traffic of

bullock-carts, but brighter than any park with its endless kaleidoscope of brilliant native costume. But then, I am only a tourist landing from the Andamans; I cannot expect the resident to sigh for an existence passed in picturesque discomfort.

Rangoon is the head and hands of Burma; there is the seat of Government, and there the wharves, factories, and mills, which are the outward and visible signs of the increasing riches and prosperity of Further India. There, too, in their huddled thousands, live the toilers of nearly every Asiatic race and caste, engaged in one or other of the chief industries, and slowly edging the laughter-loving, indolent Burman out of house and home. Thirty years ago, most of this same Rangoon was jungle; alligators lay basking along the river-side, and hordes of monkeys sported and chattered upon the shore. Now the Strand Road is an important highway, with more or less imposing buildings erected to overlook the river; parallel with it are the principal business thoroughfares, and at right angles run humbler streets of native dwelling-houses. At the back of the town, and more lately reclaimed from the jungle, lie Dalhousie Park and the magnificent Royal Lake, the cantonments and the racecourse; whilst, towering over all in lofty isolation, the mighty Shwè Dagon Pagoda dominates the surrounding country and strikes the clear note of true perfection which reverberates through Burma and finds

an echo, strong or faint, in every Buddhist heart. The streets in Rangoon are alive with sound and colour most mystifying to the newcomer from the West. Long lines of Madras coolies, naked but for a scarlet loin-cloth, swing along the road in Indian file; on the pathway better dressed Bengalis walk hand in hand, discussing the secret of amassing wealth; gaily-clad Burmans stand about in groups gossiping and generally enjoying themselves; syces trot along with the sahibs' polo ponies; Chinamen bustle about their business; little Jap girls, in all their finery, are wheeling perambulators; and the European "globe-trotter," in white ducks, stands open-mouthed beside the Sikh policeman, trying to make head or tail of this polychromatic confusion. He sees Hindu temples, mosques, pagodas, and joss-houses within a few yards of one another; he meets a variety of processions with bands and banners in the course of his morning stroll, remarking the similarity of their externals and the difference of their import; he hears in the course of that walk more languages spoken than can have issued from the Tower of Babel—and perhaps he remembers that only half a century ago in Rangoon the war-cry was: "Burma for the Burmese!"

Herein lies the charm of Rangoon—always from the tourist point of view; you never know what you will meet next. As you drive along any street you may encounter a Burmese funeral, though you might think it a local junketing of the



A GRAND FUNERAL

merriest kind. I came across one not long ago, accompanied by the usual band and a string of bullock-carts carrying gifts for the priesthood. Small coins were being distributed by a retainer to a crowd of delighted little boys; friends and relations, in their brightest habiliment, smoked and laughed as they sauntered along before or behind the corpse, which was borne aloft in a garish conveyance covered over with roofs of diminishing sizes tapering to a spire. Nobody was the least disconcerted when the flimsy erection gave way and toppled the body over into the shop of a Chinese soda-water merchant, who complained bitterly that so inauspicious an event would rob him of all his trade. Next I encountered a Hindu wedding, and observed at the head of the procession a large banner and a quartette of semi-nude dancers capering wildly with vicarious joy for a few annas per hour. A multitude with flags follow these, and then a kind of portable shrine with several images, which we classify as "heathen," since we do not ourselves worship them, although millions of our fellow-subjects do. I was greatly disappointed not to see the affianced couple, but was assured by a competent authority that their appearance would have been deemed unfitting. The procession closed with a rabble of mixed races, who have so far assimilated the Burmese temperament that they will walk any distance with a "show." The Chinese, too, take their part in these daily festivals, and their processions add to

the *mouvement* of any thoroughfare. One afternoon I was waiting outside a shop in Merchant Street when a buzz of animated humanity attracted my attention. It was caused by the passing of a Chinese funeral with its banners and perambulating orchestra in the van. The central figure was a sedate old Chinaman seated in a cab, over which a groom held a gigantic scarlet umbrella. After this came a succession of small boys in single file, each carrying a basket containing the personal properties of the deceased—his shoes, his robes, his fans, and (about tenthly) his well-fed pig! All these, I am told, are placed in the open grave that awaits him; but once more I was robbed of the privilege of seeing the main feature of the procession, who had been conveyed to his last resting-place earlier in the day.

At night the town is comparatively quiet but full of interest. There is not much public light, but every house has a lantern or a naked oil lamp flaring before it. When I was walking abroad one evening, seeing Rangoon by moonlight, I suddenly happened on Twenty-Second Street, and its appearance took my breath away. Imagine a narrow bye-street about half a mile long and too narrow for wheeled traffic, bordered on either side by houses and shops of the humblest order. This was transformed into a scene of irrepressible beauty by the illumination of thousands of Chinese lanterns of every imaginable size and shape and colour hanging from doors, balconies, and windows, slung or looped across the street from house to

house, or in clusters pendant from bamboo poles of exceeding height. It was a fairy scene in pale green and rose and amber which must have cost two or three hundred pounds to mount. The pathway was filled with a score of Asiatic tribes wondering, like children at a pantomime, at the splendour set before them, and gazing enraptured on the mechanical toys and street dances and native concerts provided for their amusement. It was a religious festival, being celebrated according to custom, with no thought of excluding the unbeliever from his share in the general devotion.

It will at once be recognised that, in a city where so many beauty-loving races are congregated, the occasion of a royal or viceregal visit affords an opportunity for a marvellous exhibition of that artistic decoration which plays so prominent a part in every Oriental festival. There is severe competition between the various Asiatic communities to secure the palm of public applause for the best-decorated quarter of the town, so money and time and trouble are all lavishly bestowed in friendly rivalry. No doubt the Burmese care the most; their love of a "tamasha," in whatever guise, is a permanent feature in an otherwise volatile character. They will spend any amount of money to beautify themselves and their town, and in this respect the Chinese are never far behindhand. Once I saw Rangoon *en fête* on the occasion of Lord Curzon's visit as Viceroy, and I well remember the magic beauty of the scene by day and night. Every street was garlanded with flowers,

and bordered upon either side by serried masses of human beings, whose brilliant silks and satins and velvets and cloth of gold beggar all description. At each of the chief places of worship addresses of loyalty were presented. with all the ceremony and ritual of the gorgeous East; garlands were hung round the illustrious visitors' necks, scent was sprayed over their clothes. In each quarter of the town wherein separate races reside festal arches were erected, every one of them a triumph of the decorator's art; and beneath these the leading citizens were gathered with their families, resplendent in jewels and attire of fabulous worth, to present their homage and their speeches of welcome. At the street corners pwès (or native dances) beguiled the time of waiting, hoping subsequently to attract the viceregal attention, and bands of every nationality competed for the mastery over "God save the King."

On the night of the illuminations this microcosm of the whole Eastern world transferred itself bodily to the shores of the Royal Lake, where the artistic genius of the Orient was displayed at its very best, and the Western visitors lived for a couple of hours in a fairy dreamland. The State route was from Government House to Dalhousie Park, past several little villages, each of which contributed its share of light according to its means. Arrived at the Park, the procession passed through avenues of palm trees and bamboos, in all of which tiny lamps glistened like fireflies

in the still night air, while from the water was wafted the music of Burmese instruments and the sound of native voices chanting odes of welcome.[1]

[1] EXTRACT FROM SONGS SUNG BY THE BOATMEN TOWING THE ROYAL BARGE

FIRST SONG

(*Timed according to ordinary strokes*)

He has left his Golden Throne in India under the deep shade of the Himalayas;

For he regards the people as his own offspring and wishes to promote their welfare in order that they may be as happy as the lotus in its natural element.

His purpose is to personally pour the pure water of love on the people of the several provinces.

From a happy distance beyond the sea he has come through Assam accompanied by a large mounted Bodyguard.

In this Royal Barge behold the illustrious politician of Imperial renown.

He adorns the waters of the great lake of "Hainsavate," while on its banks the birds and flowers fill the air with song and fragrance.

Oh! What a touching and picturesque scene this is.

FOURTH SONG

(*Timed according to slow strokes*)

The reins of gods are in his firm grasp. His intellect is as quick and far-reaching as the lightning, and his wisdom is deep and manifold;

From the Sea-girt Empire he came with a strong force of cavalry,

And having passed through Assam which forms a province of the Crown,

He crossed the frontiers of Burma and has at last reached Rangoon.

The people accord him a hearty welcome and for the occupant of the royal barge, which is fitted out so artistically and which glides so smoothly on the Royal Lakes, they will always pray, May he live long.—*Composed by* SAYA BA.

All round the shore were festooned myriads of Chinese lanterns and fairy lamps, showing up in bold silhouette the patient thousands waiting upon the banks for the guests of the evening. Upon the lake a score of barges and a hundred craft of various kinds, all decorated and outlined in coloured light, lent animation to the scene, which reached its climax as the State barge proceeded upon its star-sown way across the waters from the Pavilion to the Boat Club. The scene, as I remember it, was enchanting, and one which could only have been realised by a prodigal expenditure of private wealth and perfect co-operation between all sections of the community which combined to execute it. It was a veritable "Feast of Lights," which will live in the recollection of all who saw it as a joy for ever.

But Rangoon is not all processions and pyrotechnics; that is the native characteristic of the city. The capital of Burma has a very important commercial side, which the tourist will do well to study before leaving for the magnetic north. This is manned by the British colony, the grit of Burma, which is alone responsible for developing the country into a valuable asset for the Indian Empire.

I need not do more than allude to the popular visit, which I suppose every Western traveller in Burma has paid, to the timber-yards which show something of the thriving teak industry. There, from the banks of the Rangoon River, to which

the trees—the "Kings of the Forest"—have been floated from the jungles of Upper Burma, the elephants drag logs of stupendous size and weight to the machinery that awaits them. One gets an idea of the strength and sagacity of these animals as one sees them tackling this timber; using their tusks as levers until they can get their trunks round the wood. And then, with perfect balance, they will carry a tree sixty feet long, stack it exactly in its place with tusk and forehead and foot, more swiftly and far more accurately than a gang of thirty coolies. Upon one occasion when I was visiting a certain timber-yard, I noticed a small incident which showed a delightful side in the character of these sagacious animals. The elephant was marching along with his enormous load poised on his trunk, when his driver dropped the small pointed stick from which the "hathi" receives both guidance and correction. Immediately the animal stopped and unshipped his burden, in order that he might pick up and hand back to the mahout the chastening rod. It was a gratuitous courtesy which one had hardly expected from an elephant.

But the rice-milling is, perhaps, even more important to the people of Burma and India than the teak industry. "Paddy" is grown in every village in Lower Burma; you see its cool green colour wherever you look. The natives mill it for themselves, a process which is cheap, though really uneconomical; but the rice mills are fed by brokers,

who buy all over the country, and send the grain in beautifully carved barges down to Rangoon. It is well worth while to spend an hour or two in the early morning at one of these large industries, seeing the rice unloaded, cleaned, and graded; the broken grain handled, the husks ground into meal, and finally packed into sacks and sent all over the world. And it is not a little stimulating to reflect that each of these mills, though worked by hundreds of natives, is directed by only half-a-dozen young Britons, who find the brains and the tact so to conduct their work without friction that a staple food is now cheaply and constantly supplied to millions of our fellow-subjects.

Equally interesting are the oil refineries at Syriam, where some five thousand natives work with forty Britons to produce burning and lubricating oils, which we use every day at home without considering what they are or whence they come. I have seen the green liquid oozing up from the oil wells of the Irrawaddy and consigned to flats, which carry it down to the Pegu River, where it is pumped into vast receivers at the Syriam works. We may there follow the scientific processes whence issue naptha, petrol, all kinds of engine oil, and also wax candles of every dimension. This is another of the British industries which is helping Burma and India, and of which both capitalists and operatives may be most justly proud.

An examination of the smaller trades, wood and

silver carving, silk weaving, and precious stone dealing will fill up any spare moments in the morning or evening of the days we spend in Rangoon. In all these native callings there is something irresistibly fascinating: to see the broad-hatted Shan producing handfuls of rubies and sapphires from the innermost recesses of his voluminous clothing, groups of nimble-fingered workmen fashioning quaint grotesques of men and animals on screens and betel-boxes, and knots of raven-tressed girls in crimson or white or yellow weaving at the looms.

When all these things have been seen we will join the never-ending procession of pilgrims to the platform of the Shwè Dagon Pagoda, and there obtain a glimpse into the spiritual life of the Burmese people.

XVIII

OF PAGODAS AND THE PRIESTHOOD

THE devotional atmosphere of Burma is certainly felt from the moment one enters the country until the day of departure. High on every hill, deep in every valley, upon the banks of every river, in the heart of the jungle, are pagodas; always, everywhere, pagodas. They may be of gold or of clay, of wood or of stone; simple or elaborate, great or small, aggressively modern or crumbling into dust, no matter; the erection of each has been a conscious act of piety performed by some one dead or alive, for which he is duly credited when the sum of his virtues or vices comes to be balanced in the final reckoning, and which inspires in him the hope that his next incarnation will be at least one higher upon the ladder which leads to Perfection. But there is no merit in repairing these constructions, and therefore the Burman who has come into money, whether through winning a Derby lottery or as a result of a plentiful rice harvest, gives no heed to the preservation of his father's pagoda, but sets to work to build one for his own salvation. Hence it is that, in so many towns and cities throughout the country, one notices countless relics of piety in the past; these



may possibly stimulate a rising generation to the performance of acts of merit on its own account, but they do not impress the traveller as monuments of a living faith. And I cannot help feeling that the Government was right in its recent determination not to grant lands for new shrines of this description, unless the donor was prepared to lodge a certain sum of money for the repairing of his offering in memory of Buddha.

In Upper Burma, as it seems to me, there are many evidences that the national religion is in a more prosperous state than in the lower province. There is more devotion at the pagodas, more reverence paid to the monks, more care that superstition shall not supplant the true worship of Buddha. These monks or holy men (or whatever the exact translation of the word "poonghi" may be) are noteworthy features in Burmese life, and I advise a study of them in Mandalay, the "Royal City of Gems" itself. Their function is to teach the young, and to be an example of the Perfect Life to all men. They must renounce the world and all its works; they must beg their food each morning from door to door; they must not care where they live nor what they wear; in sickness or in health they must ask assistance from none. But upon the laity rests the full responsibility of tending them, under penalty of some horrible fate in their next incarnation. Thus it invariably occurs that, in the choicest spot outside nearly every town and village, some devout person has

erected a monastery with seven roofs for the priesthood; that, on the poonghis' daily rounds (saffron-robed and bare-headed, with a large earthen bowl between their hands), the faithful emerge from their houses to meet them, and pour of their best provender into the capacious receptacles provided; that, in the monastery itself, cushions and rolls of silk, fans and umbrellas are constantly found awaiting the gracious acceptance of these holy men.

In Mandalay the ascendency of the priesthood over the populace is everywhere evident, and is most wisely encouraged by the British Government. Twenty years ago, when Upper Burma was annexed by Great Britain, the assistance of the priesthood was very valuable in hastening the pacification of the country; it is therefore an act of political justice to maintain the status, so far as we can, of such timely allies, whilst we obliterate all traces of the temporal rule of King Theebaw. And, although we may be told that, in the province of Lower Burma, the example of the poonghis is not what once it was, yet it has to be remembered that they still have a tremendous influence over the mass of the children of the country. In Burma every child must pass through the priests' school, in which he is taught the three great lessons of self-control, reverence for his elders, and "enlightenment." As he passes from boyhood into manhood every Burman becomes a poonghi himself, for a longer or shorter time

according to circumstances, and in later life his supreme moral duty is to build pagodas, to cherish the teachers who have instructed him, and to keep the Great Law. Buddism, remember, teaches him no prayers; there is no one to pray to; no intercession, for Buddha is gone. But the Law remains and the Example must be followed. He has taught that the life brings its own reward; for virtue happiness, misery for sin. And the goal for all is to be Nirvana—peace and rest eternal; but not until, perhaps after many incarnations, the Perfect Life shall have been lived from the cradle to the grave. Gaudama's religion is the tradition of his people, and public opinion insists upon its observation.

The traveller who, from the foregoing pages and from other and ampler sources, has gained some knowledge of the Soul of this people, will now have a deeper sympathy with those to whom the Great Pagoda at Rangoon is more precious than any other building in the world. It is the most sacred, the oldest, and therefore the highest edifice in Rangoon. From the harbour it is seen, high above the hanging mists of the morning, towering over the blue palm trees and the low wooden roofs of the city; or, from the far distance of the inland jungle, its golden canopy gleams like some hero's helmet, brilliant in the foreground of an Eastern sunset. Such is the wondrous fascination of this Pagoda from afar, that all men feel restless until they have

approached and known it. Its magnetism cannot be gainsaid, and from its lonely eminence it seems to claim attention with all the imperiousness of a Cæsar. Its charm is ever potent, whether you approach it by midday or by moonlight, at the rising or the setting of the sun. To this shrine, the home of relics sacred to the Buddhist world, throng crowds of pilgrims every day from every part of Burma, from Cambodia and Korea, from Ceylon and Siam. Guarded by two grotesque heraldic lions of gigantic stature stands the portal of this famous fane. The ascent from the roadway to the Pagoda platform is one of an hundred rugged steps; a street covered by a series of richly carved roofs, once gay with vermilion and gold, and supported by brave old columns of wrought stone. Lepers formerly infested this place, displaying their unsightly misfortunes as an incentive to the charity of the passer-by, but mercifully this revolting exhibition is now a thing of the past. Upon either side of the ascending pathway are ranged tables of merchandise—a bazaar of strangely assorted wares, destined for the sustenance of the pilgrims or the service of the shrine. Rice and sweetmeats, cake and clothing, fruit and flowers are piled here; there you may buy toys or gongs, gold leaf or tobacco, and at an abnormal price. Presiding over the stalls are the temple slaves—the pariahs of Burman social life. They are said to be the descendants of prisoners of war taken long

ago; they may never leave the temple, nor marry outside their class—a curious caste restriction in an absolutely democratic community.

On reaching the summit we stand upon the temple platform and are rewarded by a sight which is certainly unique. A forest of pagodas have grouped themselves round and about the overwhelming golden dome which dominates and consecrates the whole. Now we are on holy ground indeed, bewildered and amazed at the richness, the variety, and incongruity of this agglomeration of strange temples. Long since the true base of the Great Pagoda has been hidden from view by the mass of the contributory shrines which surround it; and now, alas, still newer and gaudier and grander and uglier pagodas are in process of construction — the offerings of wealthy Buddhists, whose piety is advertised by the label which each donor affixes to his gift, stating his name, the date of erection, and the cost of the edifice.

Yet, varied as these are, Buddha is within, about, and above them all. Every pagoda has its figure of Gaudama, cross-legged or recumbent; some have a dozen such, some an hundred. The inner sanctuaries of many of these shrines are dim with the fumes of a thousand candles, and with the smoke of fire from perfumed woods burned in honour of the god. There, in the mysterious gloom, moves the saffron-robed priesthood, whilst before the object of their worship

kneel groups of gaily clad peasantry from near and far. All round the platform are these devout little bands, planted in every direction like lovely flower-beds—knots of prostrate colour—offering to Buddha the best they have to give: gold-leaf to decorate his shrine, towels for his use after ablution, punkhas to waft a cool breeze over him, food for him to eat, flowers for him to wear. Pass on until you reach the massive bell, miraculously recovered from the depths of the Rangoon River; there you will encounter fortune-tellers casting horoscopes and predicting pleasant things to ambitious youths and dainty maidens. Now an aged priest arrests your attention, squatting upon the ground and hammering a gong whilst he invokes Heaven's blessing upon all who will throw a penny into the carpet spread out before him. Next you may pass a gramophone bleating out Burmese airs, or an old medicine woman selling herbs which will cure the ninety-six diseases to which Burman flesh is heir. Here, again, is a gentle old monk sitting beneath the Sacred Tree and reading the Law to an assembled throng of devout Burmese ladies; there, is a whole corner of the piazza occupied by the Chinese Friendly Association, who have decorated the space allotted to them with lanterns and banners and are giving a variety performance for the amusement of their particular persuasion.

Suddenly, out of this strange hurly-burly, emerges a dear old gentleman clad in white, a

native trustee of the Pagoda. He can show us the Treasury, and explain to us better than any one else the significance of the various and curious effigies which ornament the temple square. He, too, can lead us to a secluded corner of the Pagoda platform where lies a monument that does not soon fade from the memory. Hidden away behind the carving and the gilding and the shrines are the graves of a dozen British officers and men—redcoats and bluejackets—who lost their lives at the storming of the Shwè Dagon fifty years ago. There they lie at peace under the shadow of a spreading tree, buried with the rites of the Church of England within the precincts of the most sacred Buddhist temple; and the sons of the vanquished race, of whom our friendly trustee is one, spare no pains to tend the tombs of their fallen conquerors.

Then, threading his way back among the throng, our companion leads us to the base of the central monument, the very Shwè Dagon, behind the excrescent shrines which hide it. First he will point to a series of carefully constructed channels which act as conduit pipes, leading the water which, in the rainy season, laves this golden wonder, into four tanks built to receive it with its precious residuum.

"This Pagoda," he explains, "nobody know how old, *but long before your Christ.* He very high; nobody know how high, but taller than

your London Cathedral. All gold from bottom to top, nobody know how thick; only after the rains one man pay trustees £1000 a year to empty water tanks at bottom and keep gold washing for himself. . . ."

Then he will tell of the great river or lake which flows beneath the foundations of this sacred edifice and winds somewhere to the sea; the spirits of the righteous ever sail about it in ships, keeping the foundations pure. Many have sought to explore it, but no one who has penetrated to its mystic depths has ever returned to see the light of day. . . .

But now the sun has risen high in the heavens; the glare upon the gold and alabaster has become intense, and it is time to descend once more through the shady arcades to the palm groves below. With a sigh and a backward glance you go; sorry to have to turn your back upon one of the most striking temples that man has raised to the Ideal of his adoration.

XIX

"THE ENGLISHMAN'S HOME . . ."

THERE is considerable truth in the phrase that an Englishman can make himself at home anywhere upon the habitable globe. In his upbringing there is an element of self-sufficiency which, although it does not always smile upon our European neighbours, is the salvation of the noble army of exiles who labour for their living in the highways and by-ways of a scattered Empire. Early in life he learns that, if home is within the heart, surroundings matter but little. So he puts up with much discomfort and suffers rules comparatively gladly; he weathers the winters of Northern America and the summers of the tropics in the assurance that, when the day's work is done, he will return—if only for a few brief hours—to that state of mental composure and detachment which is inseparable from the British idea of home. Materially speaking, "home" means different things to different people. The solitary Civil Servant, the tea-planter, the soldier on the frontier, induce the most agreeable sensations of that pleasant word as they lie in long easy-chairs for an hour before dinner, with those two faithful servants, the pipe and the glass, in attendance. The "mem-sahib"

makes her bungalow in Rajputana or Rangoon as pretty and as comfortable as circumstances may permit. Her drawing-room, with its piano, its shaded lamps and palms, its photographs and *bibelots*, spells "home" at a glance. The dining-room, whose snowy napery is adorned with choice cut flowers, crystal and silver, bears witness eloquent and satisfying that the heart, which left England and children with a sigh, does not spend its days in idle repining, but works its magic charm in compound and cantonment, itself environed by and evoking in others those memories and refinements which we associate with life in the homeland.

The young recruit to the arts of peace and war has his "home"; and the sealed pattern is his old diggings at the University, or the smoking-room in the home he left west of Suez. Whips and polo-sticks, guns, cricket-bats, and fishing-rods furnish his sitting-room, together with a couple of portable arm-chairs, some half-dozen good engravings, a box of cigarettes, and *The Sporting Times*. He is a much more important person out here than he can ever hope to be, at his age and with his income, at home. He has several servants—for no man can do two jobs in these latitudes—a dogcart, two polo-ponies at least, and a terrier. He belongs to the Club, where he can give little dinners and play bridge, and there is still money enough left to take him once or twice a year for a shooting expedition in the Shan States or mahseer fishing on the upper reaches of the Irrawaddy. Of course he must have

his "grouse" like every other Englishman, generally about the slowness of promotion or the difficulty of getting leave; but you will travel far before you find a happier disposition than that which resides in the sporting personality of Young England in the East.

It is upon the foregoing classes that we travellers have to rely for our comfort and information, and not infrequently for board and lodging. We generally set out from home with two or three letters of introduction, but these are more than sufficient on such hospitable shores. At the hotel, where our rooms have been engaged, there are notes awaiting us from each of our future friends offering to do all they can for us, asking us to meals, and suggesting expeditions in the neighbourhood. If the hotel proves impossible for the "tender-foot"; if a plague of grasshoppers and white ants is raging by the river-side; if the absurd regulations of the hotel forbid the use of the punkah during the hours that should belong to sleep; then, with a commanding kindness, we are swept off, bag and baggage, to stay as long as we choose at a spacious bungalow in cantonments. And there we study home life in the East at our leisure. The Major rules the establishment, for it is a Sahib's country; but he must be master of at least four languages before he can efficiently do so. The lady of the house, whose constitution has suffered from the climate, does her best to cope with a polyglot household, which does not appreciate the necessity

of obeying orders given by a woman. We rise at six o'clock, and then, refreshed by the cup of tea and piece of toast which we are proud to refer to as "*chota hazri*," we can either go for a two hours' ride or see the sights, as the humour takes us. Breakfast is at half-past nine, a noble meal worthy of a more important name, after which there is rest for the idle and three hours of office work for the busy man. "Tiffin" comes at one o'clock for those who want it, and at four the sun permits us to go out again. This is the time when rank and fashion disports itself in tum-tum and barouche, driving leisurely round Dalhousie Park, or takes more vigorous exercise at polo on the Maidan, or rows on the Lake. Towards 6.30 P.M. the gay world meets by general consent at the Gymkhana Club, and spends a sociable hour until it is time to dress for dinner. That is the ordinary sort of programme, but we visitors, licensed libertines that we are, may alter it as we choose. The Major will leave his office for a day to take us into the jungle; his wife will forego her siesta to help us choose silks in the bazaars. They will either of them be our associates in the hundred and one eccentricities which make the native regard the travelling European with suspecting eye—things which, under normal conditions, residents would never dream of doing. They will halt a procession or a water-carrier that we may snap-shot them; they will toil up to pagodas which they have never before visited; they will drive with us into the Shan village behind



Government House to assist in our quest of rubies from the mines. Their carriages are at our disposal, their servants at our beck and call, their very meals are timed for our convenience. Good luck to them!

And when we have exhausted the resources of Rangoon, and our soul is longing for a sight of the country, we have but to turn to any sporting subaltern of our acquaintance, and we can be off into the jungle at twelve hours' notice in pursuit of wild elephant, man-eating tiger, or smaller game. I have been on several such expeditions, and cannot withhold my appreciation of all the arrangements so speedily made and so successfully carried out. "Making a good bundobust" was what my young friends prided themselves upon, and they are entitled to all the credit they may claim. Nothing was forgotten—provisions, ponies, transport for a week: the whole thing went with a swing, and, although we never saw another white man, we lived on the fat of the land. In the villages through which we passed, and in which my cicerones were known and liked, the natives brought fowls and eggs, oranges, plantains, and papyas to replenish our larder, and they would often stay and talk with us over the gossip of that desolate neighbourhood until late into the night. There they sat upon their heels, chewing betel-nut or smoking cheroots; merry and deferential, rejoicing in the prospect of a bumper rice harvest,

bewailing the invasion of the tiger who carried off a very nice girl from the village last week, and telling us stories of dacoity in the old days which will never come again, for the British Government has crushed those robber organisations out of existence.

It was splendid to see how well the Englishman got on with these Burmans, talking their language fluently and in their own peculiar spirit. No less happy was he in managing his servants, whose wiles gave him endless joy. The bearer who thought he would like to go home, and so shammed sick, was told that he was really ill and must ride. After being kicked off a mule three times in a quarter of a mile, he elected to walk on as before. The syce who feigned rheumatism as a reason for leaving the party, was instantly cured when he saw an iron being heated red-hot in order that his pains might be relieved by an application of the same to his affected limbs. The servant who abstracted his master's cheroots was begged to take only one, not two, for every one smoked by the sahib: and the "boy" who stole whisky and made up the deficiency with water, found himself quite unwell the day after discovery; but he did not know that the sahib had added a little "medicine" to the whisky, until the fact was publicly announced by "master" to all his servants. Dinner was always a great feature in the jungle; so much depended upon the ingenuity of the cook, a

Madrassi, who was eternally at loggerheads with the Mohammedan butler. Most days we had chicken soup, but on one occasion we found "Bully-soup" on the bill of fare. It was chicken nevertheless, and an explanation was demanded.

Said the butler with a smile: "Not bully-soup, but hiding name from master; giving chicken every day, master might be beating." On another occasion we were promised pudding, and expectation rose high. At the proper moment a familiar "shape" arrived shivering on a plate.

"What is this?" asked the sahib.

"God only knows," replied the butler; "he (the cook) says it is an ice, but I see it is blancmange, and I think it was cooked in a tobacco tin."

Other friends I have made, to whom I must be for ever grateful: friends who lent me carriages and steam launches to make trips which would otherwise have been impossible; captains of river steamers whose cheery conversation and comfortable deck-chairs made every journey seem too short; French missionaries in out-of-the-way places, dispensing a simple hospitality with the grace of the land of their birth, and living a life that is both a benefit and an example to the folk amongst whom they dwell.

One thing alone worries me as I leave the scenes of such unfailing kindness, and it must have perplexed many a man before me. What return can we offer for all that we are given—

often by hosts who can ill afford it? Honestly, I have sometimes felt ashamed of accepting so much hospitality that must perforce go unrequited. It happens, with unbroken regularity, both in America and the East, that we rovers are admitted as guest-members of all the best clubs in the countries that we visit; yet, when they come "home," our hosts find the doors of nearly every club in London closed to them, for "honorary members" are unknown in Piccadilly or Pall Mall. If immortality be not yet assured to any man, it will certainly be achieved by him who can so influence the Panjandrums of Club-land that they will rejoice to receive with open arms the men who are back for a short holiday in the old country, whose residents owe them many an unpaid debt. It is all very well to say that in distant lands men are only too glad to be of use to fresh faces from home; I hope that few of us are immodest enough to believe it. A real obligation does rest upon us, and can only be discharged by small instalments.

So, whilst we are their guests, let us be as good company as we can. The *blasé* Briton who is tired of sight-seeing, who thinks all natives are the same, who takes no interest in the problems which occupy his hosts, who accepts every attention as his birthright, must be a tiresome creature and an unwelcome guest. So, too, is the peripatetic prig, with his interminable essays to the oldest inhabitant on how to do things in a country of

whose conditions he does not know the alphabet; the man who is always crying for perfection amongst those who have to make the best of life under adverse circumstances; the man who hunts for exclusive information as busily and as selfishly as a German professor after an elusive moth. But the natural man, the fellow with a fund of good stories and cheery gossip, who does not forget faces nor the delivery of messages to friends in England, who plays a decent game of bridge and doesn't care what he rides, that is the man who is passed all over the East from Yokohama to Bombay with pleasure and regret. The man who will keep up a spasmodic correspondence with those who have befriended him, "lest auld acquaintance be forgot"; who will order saddles, hurry up the gun-maker, or the London tailor; and who, if a good book is published, will remember to send it out for hot-weather reading—there is the ideal "cold-weather" visitor, but I do not think he has yet been born.

XX

WORK AND PLAY

As surely as Japan is the land of temples and of blossom, Burma may be regarded as the Egypt of Asia; the land of a lotus-eating calm, the land where it is always afternoon and never the hour for work. Its upper classes, and a great many of their admiring imitators, confine their activities to watching hirelings work and play. Leisure is their one delight, with sufficient money to dress, eat, and smoke endless cheroots. Amusement is "the predominant partner" in their scheme of life. "Jack Burman," as he used to be called when we annexed the country, is very particular concerning the spirits which are about his path and about his bed from birth to burial, but I do not think that he has yet located the fairies who gave him his double dose of original fun and idleness. Even the work, to which he devotes what time he can spare from dancing and love-making, is really trivial both in quality and quantity; indeed, one would be nearer the truth if one asserted that *all* the work worth doing is performed either by nature or by *Mrs.* Jack.

Unquestionably the pwè (pronounced pouay) is the form of amusement which has most attrac-

tion for every Burman, old and young. It is a native entertainment, which is convenient at every stage in his career, at every season of the year, in joy and in sorrow, in war or in peace. When the baby is born there is a pwè; when he is named, when he goes to school, when he leaves school, when he is married, when he prospers, when his father dies, and when he himself dies, there will assuredly be a pwè. And, besides these personal celebrations, there are village pwès and municipal pwès: in Mandalay the exiled princesses gives pwès to keep them in the fragrant remembrance of the people.

One night I was in Mandalay, and I gave a pwè—quite an unexpected affair it turned out. A friend of mine had never seen one, so I applied for leave to have a performance in the compound of the Dak Bungalow. Two rough platforms were erected in the course of the afternoon—a preparation which advertised the evening's entertainment far and near. Law and order were looked after by the local police, for there was no question of closing the gates to the populace and having a "private view." By six o'clock crowds were coming into the compound, and refreshment stalls were already busy outside. At eight o'clock there must have been three thousand people present, all uninvited, and a better audience I never saw.

There are three sorts of pwè: "posture dancing" by a troupe of girls, with a chorus of men,

is the most expensive and the rarest treat of all. This is usually reserved for great public festivals, and costs several hundred pounds. I once saw such a ceremonial pwè at a lonely village in Upper Burma; it was given in honour of a high official who was passing through the district. The mainstay of the performance is the orchestra, whose ceaseless accompaniment would be very disconcerting to European artists. This band is composed entirely of men, and of these the chief is the drummer. He sits inside a wide fret-worked barrel, and around him hang a number of tuned drums which he strikes with the palm of his hand. Near him, and within a similar cage, is the gongman, encompassed by a circle of modulated discs which he hammers with a padded stick. Beside these I noticed a large hanging drum, an enormous pair of brazen cymbals, a shawm or two, a sackbut, and a pair of wooden clappers. The music was very Oriental, and I shall not, therefore, attempt to criticise it. After the overture an ode was chanted by a chorus of men; it was rhythmical and almost tuneful to my Western ear. Then followed a *ballet-chantant* by the young ladies of the best families residing in the neighbourhood. Very charming and picturesque they appeared as they executed the various movements and posturings which are the main features of this particular pwè. Raven black was their hair, smeared with grey ashes their faces, carmined their lips. Upon their bodies they wore short white jackets adorned





THE DRAMATIC PWÈ

with jewelled necklaces, their legs being shrouded in yellow silk draperies drawn tight over pale lilac petticoats, and their tiny feet encased in magenta silk stockings. Thus attired, this bevy of sixteen maidens presented a very attractive spectacle to the eye, and the effect was enhanced by the grace of their movements as they bent their supple bodies to the lilt of the strange music, or crouched upon the ground to croon in a minor key the weird folksongs of Upper Burma.

We, however, contented ourselves with the humbler and more popular "shows"—the play and the marionettes. First came the drama, which was more like a variety entertainment than anything else, consisting in songs and dances and jokes by a quartette of damsels and clowns, whose facetiæ kept every one in a roar of laughter. This lasted for an hour and a half, and then we all moved in a body to the puppet-show, where a fairy story was cleverly enacted by dolls cunningly manipulated by hands from above. There was a wild beast fight in the forest (the jungle represented by a portable bush), a reception of his Ministers of State by the King, and a topical speech on Mandalay affairs, which caused general amusement. We saw the love-making of a prince and princess, and heard the gossip of their retainers —all accompanied by wild music from the band. At eleven o'clock, to the utter amazement of the inhabitants, we closed the entertainment; and in half-an-hour the compound was empty, the stages

were removed, and the eating booths had disappeared. That was the great surprise to my Burmese guests, who do not think much of a performance that cannot last out more than a couple of hours. They were studiously grateful, but I have no doubt that they infinitely preferred the ordinary conditions under which pwès are conducted in the streets of the larger towns. There they begin about 9 P.M., and the spectators seem to collect quite casually in a circle made in the thoroughfare by food-stalls and flare lights. The men produce the family bedding—a thin mattress and a warm blanket; the women bring their smallest babies and largest cigars; and thus, detached from all home ties, they settle down to spend the night at these open-air theatres, sleeping and waking until six o'clock in the morning, when the wearied actors ring down the curtain upon a slumbering audience.

Boat-racing is another favourite pastime in Burma, and most of the young men can pull a good oar when they choose. They will race in anything, from a barge to a dug-out, and the excitement at a public regatta is indescribable. The moat which surrounds the great city wall of Fort Dufferin is a favourite place for these entertainments, providing as it does an excellent stretch of smooth water for the races and ample accommodation for spectators. A grand regatta was held there during Lord Curzon's visit to Mandalay, and a more animated scene it is im-

possible to conceive. Beneath the shade afforded by Government House the European community and the foremost Burmese guests were assembled upon the lawn which runs down to the "course." Upon the farther bank, protected from the sun by a long avenue of dark green palm trees, thousands of natives from the city were gathered together—a radiant border of living colour—who had assembled to do honour to the Viceroy and to see the regatta. Every race was followed with intense interest, and its result was received with an outburst of hearty cheering that would do credit to the Oval or the Derby. The Burmese system is for only two boats to compete at a time—long low canoes they are, whose bulwarks are almost level with the water. Upon each seat sit one or sometimes two gleaming figures, naked but for a loin-cloth, and armed each with a short paddle. In each canoe are about thirty of these men, one of whom beats a drum or a gong, and shouts like a man possessed to indicate the time for the stroke. In the stern sits the captain of the boat upon a raised seat, roaring his directions above the din to the crew under his command. The gun fires: every man gives a yell and stabs his paddle into the water at a tremendous pace until, close to the winning post, they are rowing about eighty strokes a minute. The goal is reached with a wild hurrah, and the winning crew rows back down the line of spectators with a swaggering ornamental stroke, chanting a discordant pæan

of victory. Bands of music were playing on both sides of the moat; pwès were danced amidships on some of the canoes by native damsels, greatly daring; and thus the afternoon glided into evening, unperceived by the festive gathering on the farther shore, intently listening to the concerts provided for its diversion when not betting wildly upon the various items in the regatta programme.

Before closing this short *résumé* of native recreations, which were new to me, I will just refer to the game of Chen-lohn, a sort of Burmese football played as a solo with a light wicker ball. The object is to kick the ball as often as you can "to your own foot," to kick it backwards and forwards over the head with heel and toe, to catch it on either shoulder or the nape of the neck, and to dislodge it therefrom purely by action of the muscles. It is an engrossing game to watch when played by experts, who have been known to keep the ball up for an hour without letting it touch the ground.

So much for amusement. I suppose attending to the rice crop is the most serious industry in which a Burman engages, and his method is simplicity itself. After the rains are over he sows his seed on the high ground of his farm, and proceeds to till the low ground by harnessing his oxen or water buffaloes to single-barred harrows, and letting them carry him (or his children for preference) over this sea of mud until it is well

stirred up. In August his seed has ripened and grown to young plants, which are then transferred to the low ground (again by his female relatives and offspring) and planted in holes made by their devoted hands. The farmer looks on and smokes his cheroot the while. In November and December the harvesting is done (by labour imported from Upper Burma), the husking is performed at home by the unmuzzled "ox that treadeth out the corn"; and when the grain has been winnowed, the cultivator makes up his boat-crew of sturdy oarsmen and a few pretty girls, loads his barge with rice, and proceeds to the nearest market on the Irrawaddy with his produce. It must be understood that the foregoing is not continuous labour; but each stage of harvesting is made an occasion for diversions of different kinds.

Fruit gathering is a kindred occupation, and is performed mainly by the women, who may be seen any morning bringing their fruit and vegetables to market, either on the top of their heads or piled up in bullock-carts. Burmese fruits are delicious to eat, especially the papya, the custard-apple, and the mangosteen; others, the jack-fruit and the durrian for instance, are acquired tastes, and it is doubtful whether their acquisition is worth the pain and grief which it entails. The Province of Tenasserim is considered the best part of Burma for fruit, and Moulmein, even in its decline, preserves its renown on this account; also for its excellent Burmese cheroots, the tobacco for which

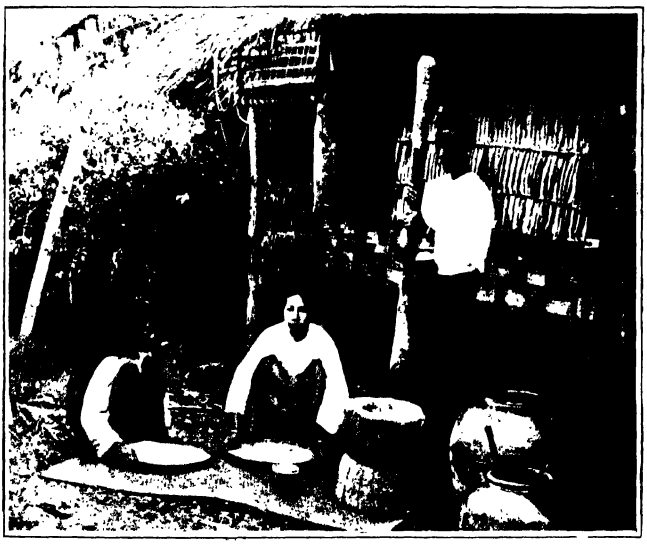
is brought over from Madras, and is rolled by the dainty Burmese ladies for home consumption. The "chic" thing in this country is to have your own special cheroot girl, who knows your favourite strength and size and flavour, and to employ her to roll only for yourself and your friends.

At Moulmein also I saw the little that remains of the old ivory carving for which that pretty little town was once so famous; now there is but one small village of a few houses which still works at it under a head-man. When I was there they had practically nothing to sell, having been engaged for the past twelve months on the ornamentation of two pairs of elephants' tusks for some rich merchant at Delhi. Customers who cannot wait for a year or so may transfer their orders to China or Japan, and the Burman in that case will resign himself to his loss with easy philosophy.

Down at Bassein, one of the largest towns in Lower Burma, there is a pottery village, whose inhabitants would have been the envy of the late Josiah Wedgwood for the accuracy of their eye, the freedom of their design, and the simplicity of their plant. Their only tools are a stone wheel (which turns on a stick of bamboo fixed into the earth, and is kept revolving by the movement of a small child's foot), a hoop of bamboo for smoothing the surface, and a large shell to do whatever hollowing is necessary. The material is a rich red clay, extracted from the laterite fields behind their huts, and the furnace is a deep hole dug in the



GRINDING OUT OIL



HUSKING THE RICE

bank by the river and bricked in when the fire is lighted. It was a fascinating pastime to stand and watch men, women, and children, each at a special little turn-table, without models or measurements of any kind, fashioning water-pots and jars and platters of all sorts and sizes, as regular in form and design as if the very latest appliances had been used for them.

At the other extremity of Bassein is a street devoted to umbrella makers, who drive a brisk trade in one of the absolute necessities of Burmese existence. Under the fierce sun and drenching rains of the tropics everybody needs an umbrella; from the toddling child, who screens himself beneath a thing the size of a matinée hat, to the poonghi, with his enormous sun-shade as large as a carriage umbrella. Here again it was difficult to find an article for sale, as they only manufacture "to order"; and Western patience is apt to give out before the period of Eastern execution is reached,—an indefinite interval of time, which depends upon the number of holidays and the personal convenience of the manufacturer. However, the business appeared to be in full swing; bamboo supplying the place of steel and whalebone, and the coverings of oiled silk being gaily painted with figures and flowers after the luxuriant imagination of the Burmese artist. Most of this work is done by girls, and quite high prices are paid to umbrella and fan designers, whose services are always in demand.

At Amarapura, near Mandalay, we can still see little colonies of Burmans working, under the shade of great forest trees, at the handlooms, and preparing rolls of those brilliant silks in which all classes love to attire themselves. Their chief markets are in Mandalay and Rangoon, whence every week come agents to pay for and carry off the output of the previous seven days. The new bazaar at Mandalay is a huge practical Western monstrosity, and I certainly think that the ramshackle old silk market in Rangoon is a far more picturesque establishment to visit, with its endless series of narrow passages flashing with every colour of the rainbow. Upon either side of these long corridors are the merchants' stalls, each presided over by a cheery little lady sitting cross-legged upon the table among her wares, and gossiping across the passage to her fellow saleswomen. All are smoking; and, as the stranger picks his path along the muddy gangway, they are interested in him for a moment as a foreigner, but not as a possible purchaser; then they resume their merry and interminable chatter. In fact, as I have said, they care little for business, these Burmans; and, indeed, if it were not for their women-folk, their few remaining industries would be already obsolete. It is this incurable indolence which accounts for the enormous influx of natives of India and, more recently, of China, into Lower Burma, which will soon be swamped, racially and financially, by the cheap labour and smarter methods of Madras and elsewhere.

It is but a few streets from the silk bazaars to the silversmiths, and we may as well take the lacquer-makers on our way, stopping to watch the various processes by which the laths of bamboo are split and plaited, woven together and varnished, painted and gilded until they form the vermilion and gold boxes that are so familiar in the East. Leaving them we pass through Chinatown and down the brokers' street, where little knots of men stand at their shop doors disputing the price of this ruby or that diamond—for the money-lenders are the precious stone merchants in Rangoon. There are plenty of such gems to be had in this street: and, if we had time, we could go into any of the back shops and let sapphires and emeralds and rubies shower through our fingers like rain, now and then finding one whose price is not wholly out of proportion to its size. But, for the most part, the best of the stones go straight to London or Paris from the ruby mines of Upper Burma and from the sapphire districts of Siam.

Finally we arrive at the silver quarter—a broad road, fringed with tumble-down houses, which leads up to the Great Pagoda. The Burmese silver work has much to recommend it: the metal is pure, and the work thereon embossed is quaint in design if somewhat irregular in execution. There is nothing to be seen of it in shop windows; that would be too severe a temptation to the burglar, and therefore such ostentation is, I suppose, strictly forbidden. To examine it one must come to the neighbourhood

wherein the silver workers live. Not a sign is there to indicate the wealth within; only a row of mat-houses built on pillars to keep out the rats and the rains; so mount the steps and plunge into the gloom. Within its recesses you gradually discover half-a-dozen natives lolling about in various stages of nudity, and smoking the inevitable cigar; some are leisurely beating out the silver, others chisel the delicate traceries typical of the Burmese work. The master of the shop is summoned; eventually he strolls in, glad to see you; then, diving into a chest hidden beneath his bed, he hands out samples of his craftsmanship:—vases, bowls, chalices, cigarette cases, and cigar boxes of every size and description. But proudest of all is he of some cheap foreign goods of infamous design, which he spreads upon vulgar English mats, and, with uplifted hands, boasts of them as "the latest from Europe!" These are to be his patterns for the future; and, as we gaze upon their unsightly forms, we almost hear the death-knell of Burmese art, and we know the temple of mammon from whence it rings.

O West, O West! you are responsible for a great deal. At any sacrifice you are anxious to impose your faiths and rules of conduct upon Far Eastern mankind, and to undo the teachings in which he was cradled. You puzzle him with your varieties, you worry him with your contradictory opinions, perhaps you persuade him somehow to waver in his Faith. But yet, when you have

"converted" him, the question remains an open one whether he is a better man for the operation. If he be the head-man of a town or village, out of touch at once with the people of his race, a renegade from the ancient faith, he has lost whatever influence he may have had; and he is looked upon, not as an example, but as a warning by his kinsfolk and acquaintance. And, if he be a "convert" of low degree and seeks employment, you *know* you can count upon the fingers of one hand the employers who will take a native Christian into their service.

So with the Arts; your interference is neither welcome nor successful. What a poor return it is for all that the East has taught you—all that you ever knew of Art, in fact—to flood her bazaars with the cheap and tawdry wares that are dumped out of every steamer from Germany, England, and the States! And, worse still, to try to debase an instinctive love of the Beautiful by trading on the natives' love of novelty, and flaunting your cheap-jack designs of every conceivable material in the eyes of those whose models, *but for you*, would still be drawn from the arabesques of Persia and the imagination of Japan.

It is, indeed, sad to find the native industries thus declining and disappearing one by one. Ivory carving is now almost extinct; the ornamentation of dahs (or native daggers) with a kind of damascene work is fast becoming a forgotten art; even the incomparable silks are less rich in quality and

colour than they were a few years ago. I wonder whether Protection can arrest this artistic decay, or do anything to redeem the Burman from his incurable idleness? I fear not; but I believe that even the most convinced Free-Trader, who has fallen under the spell of Burma's fascination, would welcome a prohibitive tariff to exclude the Western enormities of all kinds which flood these simple towns and villages, and to prevent them from utterly overwhelming the native trade and prostituting the nation's taste.

The indolence of the Burman is rapidly developing into a serious problem, but one which the Indian Government can contemplate without dismay. After the few years that have elapsed since my first visit, I can observe without the assistance of statistics or the fear of contradiction, an enormous increase of imported coolie labour, of workmen and capitalists, from China, the Straits Settlements, and Japan, and of fortune-hunters of the wealthier Indian classes. A combination of these factors, ever steadily increasing, will certainly develop the country, with all its enormous possibilities, far more quickly than its own people could ever do, and so swell the yearly tribute paid into the Exchequer of the Indian Government. To such a consummation no Finance Minister will ever object while surpluses can be claimed as "acts of merit," and the cause of it will surely lie at the door of the Burmese themselves. Yet I for one will lament the day when there shall be

no room in Further India for its indigenous population, and when (as in the case of North American Indians) "reserves" must be established to preserve some traces of the leisure-loving, joyous people of Burma.

XXI

ON THE CHINDWIN

My first journey from Rangoon northward was undertaken in the winter of 1901, in the hope of joining Lord Curzon somewhere on the Chindwin River as he came south from Manipur toward Mandalay. This chapter and some of those that follow contain little else than a transcription of a fairly comprehensive diary written in odd moments during that tour through Burma in the suite of the Viceroy. The visitor from India will notice more surely than others the contrast, in scenery and populace, between the eastern and western shores of the Bay of Bengal. Especially will he appreciate the comparative quiet which reigns in Burma, and the beautifully wooded and lavishly watered tracts through which he passes in the train. His will be the joy, as he wakes on the morrow after leaving Rangoon, to find himself speeding (at no very excessive pace, however) through the greenest of country. My first impression was one of cool emerald rice-fields all the time, only broken by clusters of palm groves, in which the number of picturesque log cabins was doubled by that of pagodas of every date, sort, and kind; and my fellow travellers from across the

bay revelled in the luxuriance of the foliage, the brighter plumage of the birds, the independence of the many new types upon the platform. The only Indian faces were those of the railway officials and the waiters in the restaurant; our attention was therefore the more easily fixed upon the merry little Burman decked out in all his butterfly brilliancy, the stolid Shan peeping from under his enormous basket-work hat, the long-haired pilgrim from the frontier of the Celestial Empire.

By noon we were approaching Mandalay. The number of pagodas, which had been considerable all the time, became conspicuously greater; not only did one see them on every peak of rising ground and snuggling among the palm trees, but they rose close to the railway line in dozens; villages, almost towns of them. Massive stone-carved pagodas, their entrances guarded by dragons and leogryphs, grotesque and appalling; huge, heavy teak-wood pagodas—a note of dull brick-red against the soft green foliage—lonely, deserted, silent; not a worshipper, not a priest to stand and wait in any one of these; just a Campo Santo, stretching for miles, of forgotten and desolate shrines. At the entrance to Mandalay the bright golden temple of Arakan shines out in the distance, like a king high above his subjects of wood and stone; and, as we drew nearer still, we passed numerous monasteries, the religious schools for the Burmese youth and the homes of the Burmese priesthood. It was amusing to see them, from out their little round

windows carved like the doors of a rabbit hutch, peering in wonder as the strange train rattled past.

And so to Mandalay, whence, after engaging a cook and "making a bazaar" of meat and ice and soda-water, I soon found myself steaming down the Irrawaddy River in a comfortable little river steam-launch, kindly lent to me by the Lieutenant-Governor; past Sagaing — an ancient capital of Upper Burma—to the junction of the Irrawaddy with the Chindwin River. Thence the course was almost due north to Kindat, where I hoped to join the Viceregal flotilla. The Chindwin is a very broad, rather uninteresting river in its lower reaches, flowing between low shelving banks of sandy soil, which are for ever breaking and falling into the stream, silting up the channel which is already narrow enough. The course we had to steer was staked the whole way; outside the marks men were wading up to their knees as they tugged heavy native barges against the stream; but a far commoner sight was to see such a line of craft stuck inextricably in the mud. The shore view alternates between far stretches of barren land, broken here and there by a little patch of vivid green rice-fields, and clumps of palm trees where a pagoda, some mat huts, a few people, many babies, and a dozen hovering vultures constitute a village.

At certain intervals these villages are the recognised coaling stations for the craft that ply by

steam upon the Irrawaddy; although, except for the piles of wood stacked upon the bank, you would never guess that they were of such first-class importance. To be sure, you notice the faggots of wood, and a few cows standing in the water; but there is not a human being visible upon that deserted yellow shore. Now, three piercing shrieks from the steam whistle, and what a change! Suddenly the banks swarm with half-naked brown figures—men, women, children, babies—running from some habitation that is out of sight. In a moment the whole village is precipitating itself down the steep bank to the water's edge with as many logs as they can carry on their heads, backs, shoulders, under their arms, or in their hands. Even the babies (who, in the East, have a passion for helping their elders to work) toddle down to the river with bits of stick, generally falling into the water as they try to fling their burdens into the ship. It was a very pretty sight to watch this gang of lithe young men in loin-cloths, and of girls with beautiful long black hair and bright almond eyes, in coloured garments cross-draped from breast to knee, smoking as they swung down the hill, followed at a distance by old women tottering under their faggots, and children working at the business with a will. In less than one hour the operation of loading was completed and we were off again; but not before we saw the whole village, which had been at work for us, bathing up stream and

washing the dirt of the fuel from their arms and bodies and feet.

Here let me digress for a space, to indicate to those who care to know the kind of undertaking that is meant by "The Viceroy's Tour." Every autumn it is the custom for the Viceroy to make such a journey through some part of the vast Dependency committed to his charge; its mileage may be of greater or less extent, and its performance presents difficulties in varying degrees. In 1900, for example, the tour through Southern India was about 7000 miles long, took nine weeks in performing, and was accomplished mainly in special trains. In 1901 the tour through Assam, Manipur, and Burma was made mainly by marches (either riding or driving) or by water. It was over 4000 miles long, and took more than six weeks to conclude. When it is considered that on such a tour as this, where the difficulties of transport were very great, where roads had to be cut and made, and telegraph wires specially laid throughout a large part of the distance, the Viceroy is accompanied by a retinue of over a hundred people, then an idea will be conceived of the arrangements that have to be settled in advance. There were escorts to be found, troops to be in readiness, police to be supplied. Processions had to be arranged for state entries into towns, chiefs of remotest tribes to be notified to come to Durbar. Every event had its day and hour assigned to it weeks beforehand; and, therefore, so



A BURMESE PRINCESS



A BURMESE PEASANT

far as human prevision could prevent accidents, it was doubly necessary that there should be no delay in the progress of the Lord Sahib. The result of all this care and forethought is tabulated in a little red book which is sent in advance to all the departments concerned (Railways, Police, Military, Post Office, &c.), and to all officials through whose districts the pageant passes. This book includes detailed maps of the countries to be traversed, and is entitled "Autumn Tour of His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General." First of all it sets out the event arranged for each day during the tour. I quote from the 1901 book to show something of the life:—

November 11, *Monday:* Ride nineteen miles to Nongba, Assam.

November 12, *Tuesday:* Ride twenty miles to Kaopum, Assam.

November 13, *Wednesday:* Ride twelve miles to Laimatak, Assam.

November 14, *Thursday:* Ride thirteen miles to Bishenpur, and drive eight miles to Foiching.

November 15, *Friday:* Drive nine miles to Manipur. Public arrival.

And so on for every day of the six weeks. Then follows a map of the altitudes to be passed, and a detailed account of the proceedings of each day; I quote again from the Mandalay programme:—

November 27, *Wednesday*, 8 A.M.: His Excellency will visit the Arakan Pagoda. 4.30 P.M.: Garden party

at Government House, Burmese boat-races and sports. 9.30 P.M.: Levée.

November 28, *Thursday*, 8 A.M.: His Excellency will visit the Palace and open the Roman Catholic Leper Asylum. 4.30 P.M.: Durbar at the Palace. 9.30 P.M.: Pwès and torchlight tattoo by massed military bands in the Palace Gardens.

November 29, *Friday*, 7.45 A.M.: Leave Mandalay by special train.

The next section of the book details to the military and police authorities their duties regarding salutes, bodyguards, escorts, and patrols. Then follows the list of the Viceregal party throughout the tour, and the actual place to be occupied by each individual, whether in special train, carriage, or steamer; a full catalogue of the names of all officials connected with districts to be visited, a programme of places where every day the Viceroy will be able to receive letters and telegrams; and, finally, a descriptive account of each place of interest included in the tour.

It will be readily conceded after a perusal of the foregoing extracts that, although this annual journey is looked forward to with intense pleasure and excitement by the native population, it is not altogether an unmixed delight to those responsible for carrying it successfully through to its close.

To return to my diary: after a somewhat monotonous and lonely three days' journey, occupied in steaming and stranding alternately, we sighted the flotilla in the tortuous reaches

of the Upper Chindwin a few miles below Kalewa. The whole party were in first-rate condition, and far from disposed to enjoy the forced inactivity of life on a river steamer after their splendid ride across the mountains; nevertheless, for two days it had to be faced until we reached Alon, where, after an official reception, we entrained for Mandalay. All along the route on every platform were assembled the inhabitants, district officials, and native policemen, with the Burmese stationmaster prostrate upon a strip of carpet in their midst. Performances, similar to the pwès described in a previous chapter, were everywhere being given, although the Viceroy could not stop to see them; yet the passing of the Lord Sahib was the sign for a national holiday, and so the villagers—never over-anxious to work—having lustily cheered as the train swept by, could be seen swarming from the platform to the ballet, ready to sit and listen and applaud until far into the night.

From Sagaing, with its beautiful pagodas, a ferry boat conveyed the party to Amarapura across the river; thence to Ava (another previous capital) and into Mandalay upon the very stroke of 4.30 P.M., the predestined hour. Here there was a great "public arrival," and a kind of State reception for the illustrious visitor in a beautiful pavilion erected just outside the station. Thither His Excellency was immediately conducted in solemn procession by the English and native

dignitaries of the city. Enthroned in a crystal chair of exquisite workmanship, raised high on a daïs above the multitude, he received the salutations of one of the most brilliantly robed assemblies that I have ever seen; and there the formal addresses and introductions were gone through in the same familiar fashion as at home. At the conclusion of the ceremony this day's work was ended; so, preceded by a galloping escort of native Lancers, the Viceregal procession passed in open carriages through the broad streets of Mandalay, amid the genial acclamations of the Burmese crowd, to Government House within the walls of Fort Dufferin.

XXII

AT MANDALAY

We might have known more of Mandalay, it is true, if memories were not so short. But 1886 is a long time ago, to be sure; and, Heaven knows, we have had plenty to think about since then. Nevertheless, Mandalay was in that year taken by Great Britain from King Theebaw. His barbarities to his own relatives and outrageous treatment of the British representative were but the climax of a series of troubles caused by Burma, Upper or Lower or both, during the previous hundred years. Consequently the expedition against his capital, its immediate fall, and the annexation of Upper Burma by Lord Dufferin, surprised nobody and pacified the country.

As for "The Royal City of Gems" itself, there is nothing old about it, except some of its monasteries and pagodas. It was jungle fifty years ago, when King Min ascended the throne and dreamed the dream necessary to make it his capital. Mandalay was consequently built, succeeding Ava and Amarapura as chief town of Upper Burma. The seat of Government was surrounded by a high wall built in a perfect

square, which was in turn defended from attack by a moat 100 yards wide. This wall, which is machicolated, is 33 feet high, each side of it is 1¼ miles long, the straight line being broken to the eye by three equi-distant gates and numerous watch-towers crowned with turret roofs, painted red and gold. Within the walls little remains of Theebaw's régime, though the palaces and monuments are scrupulously preserved. Government House is built against the western wall; barracks for the troops are dotted about in the park, which also boasts a race-course and a polo ground.

But enough of "ancient" history, for to-day Mandalay is *en fête* with a vengeance; and the excuse of having the very Viceroy in their midst is quite sufficient for the merry little Burmans to take a day off work and enjoy themselves. But for the central figure, the cause for so much inactivity, there was no repose at all. From 8 A.M. the Viceroy and staff and escort were all on the move, visiting places of interest in the neighbourhood. Passing beneath many a beautiful triumphal arch whence flowers were lavishly showered upon them, and through a running fire of complimentary speeches from various committees, the cavalcade first visited a specimen "Kyaung"—pronounced Chowng, and meaning a seminary for the religious order and primary school for the youth of the country. The establishment selected for a visit was the "Queen's



THE WALLS OF FORT DUFFERIN



THE ARAKAN PAGODA FROM THE SACRED TANK

Monastery," where, in the great hall richly ornamented with crimson and gold paint, the trustees and builder and chief interpreter greeted their illustrious guest. Upon entering the hall it was observed to be entirely carpeted by saffron-robed poonghis (priests) reclining upon their elbows, and contemplating life in general and the Viceroy in particular with the usual imperturbability of their kind. After a complete inspection of the institution, a further visit was paid to the Arakan Pagoda, perhaps the most sacred shrine in Burma after the Shwè Dagon at Rangoon. Here, surrounded by a little world of officialdom, and beneath the shade of two huge State umbrellas, the Viceroy minutely examined its beauties; from the long arcade, lined with temple slaves selling wares of all kinds to pilgrims, to the magnificent central building, where stands a colossal metal figure of Gaudama, before which some scores of prostrate devotees were consecrating their gifts of coloured candles or flowers and fruit. Mr. Scott O'Connor will, I hope, pardon me for quoting from "The Silken East" his admirable description:—

"The scene as I look upon it from the eastern corridor is one of extraordinary interest. Over my head is a frescoed porch gorgeous with the colouring and the imagery of the East. Palaces, crenulated walls, and lotus-covered waters, ascending spires, kings and princes in cloth of

gold and jewelled vestments, nobles and monks, fabulous beings, elephants and horses, myriads of soldiery, demons of the grossest ugliness, and all the pains of hell, the transitoriness and the suffering of life are here depicted with singular, if primitive realism. To stand here and look up to this painted roof is to be carried away into the crowded thoroughfares of a strange and grotesque world, from which the transition back to the life surging about one is more than bewildering.

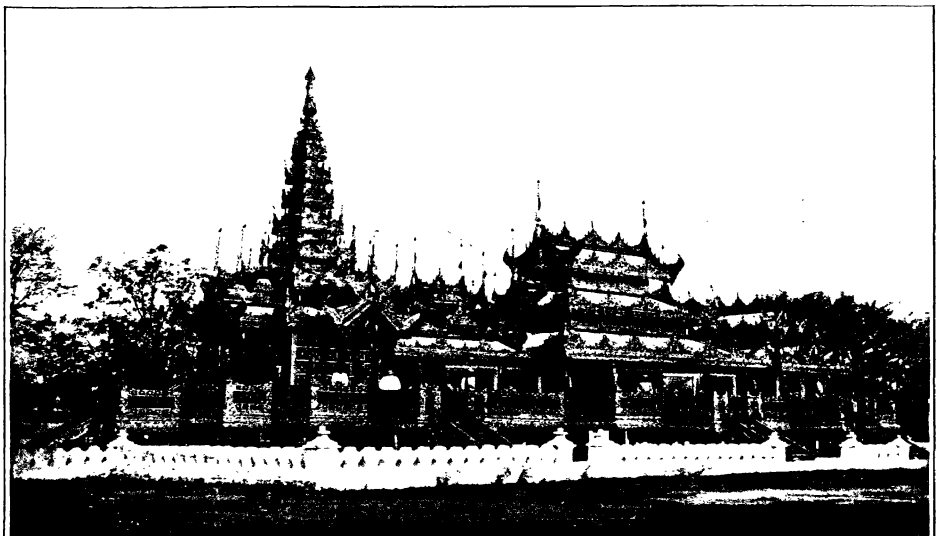
"Here under this pointed roof sits a blind leper, his hands held forward in mute appeal to the passing world; and in his stark face there is written the terrible history of his life. Look at it, for here is something that is inexpressibly sad, inexpressibly patient and resigned. Pride, fire, vivacity, hope, all have left it. Yet this man lives on. . . . A blind fiddler plays in a distant sunlit alcove, supported by his wife on the mellow *puttala*. A great crowd for ever surges by—a crowd of monks and nuns, little children and white-filleted old men, wrinkled hags like skeletons at a feast, the prettiest women and the prettiest silks of Mandalay; white-hatted Shans, Paloungs from the tea-country, women from distant highlands, in plush and velvet; the aged slow of foot, the young impetuous; faces stamped with the sadness and the weariness of life, faces of laughter and lovelit eyes; voices mumbling the never-ending litany of sorrow—*Aneitsa*, *Dookha*, *Anata* —Change, Sorrow, Unreality; voices like the

tinkle of pagoda bells with the added human thrill. All pass on under the shadow of the painted arch to the wide corridor beyond, where the light streams in through the lofty Roman archways."

Another point of interest was the great tank, where live the sacred turtles of prodigious size and inordinate sloth, due mainly to their antiquity and to the attentions of devout Buddhists who feed them incessantly by day and night. So over-fed were they that our offerings of biscuit altogether failed to move them; but the kites, for ever circling overhead, were not so replete, and swooped down with unerring accuracy upon each morsel that lay for an instant upon the water. By this time the heat of the mid-day sun warned even the untiring Viceroy that it was time to take some rest before facing the functions and festivities of the afternoon; but, before the procession returned to Government House, a third visit was paid—perhaps the most interesting of all—to the late king's palace. It stands in the centre of the great walled compound already described, now known as Fort Dufferin, within which all that is official and European has its residence. But, since the annexation, no one of the native population has been allowed to live inside the walls, save alone the aged Prime Minister who served both Kings Min and Theebaw, and who received special permission to end his days in his old home. The

Golden Palace has not been touched externally since the annexation of Upper Burma in 1885; and, although altered considerably in its uses, in appearance it remains the same as in King Theebaw's time. It consists of a large number of buildings, each of them decorated with richly carved roofs rising upon one another in tiers of diminishing size. The outhouses, as they may be termed, are still used for official purposes; their gilding and coloured glass, their lacquer work and wonderful carving contrasting strangely with the humdrum reality and commonplace of Government service as conducted *à l'Anglaise*. The main buildings of the palace are those once occupied by the king or by his wives: throne-rooms of different sizes, audience halls and colonnaded courts. In each of the public rooms stands a large gold throne, divided off by a carved wooden railing from the main portion of the chamber, and supported generally by lions. The rising sun is frescoed in gold upon a faded red lacquer wall above either side of the throne; overhead, bill downwards, hovers the sacred drake carved in wood. The whole chamber is afforested with lofty pillars of massive teak, rising sometimes to a height of seventy feet, lacquered and gilded, but now in a sad state of dilapidation.

Such is the palace where murder, misgovernment, and intrigue ruled unchecked until twenty years ago. Now the English Club occupies the Durbar Hall; and the Lion Throne Room, whose tapering



THE QUEEN'S MONASTERY, MANDALAY

spire is known to the Burman as "the centre of the Universe," has become the English church! In this building the Viceroy spent several hours upon three consecutive days, visiting every apartment and giving directions as to how best to preserve, renovate, and protect from fire this one remaining example of the ceremonial architecture of Burma. (I well remember the outcry when his decree went forth that the Club must find other premises within six months, and that the church must be transferred to more suitable quarters. To the residents such directions appeared as an unnecessary interference with their internal independence on the part of the suzerain; but amateurs of a style of architecture which is unique in the world, applauded his immediate decision to withdraw from this singularly beautiful specimen every possible risk of destruction by fire. I may add that, on my return to Mandalay after an absence of four years, I found a great many of the alterations effected, to the great improvement of the building as a whole. The tributary outhouses had been cleared away, leaving a far more satisfactory *coup d'œil* of the main buildings of the palace; the English church had been removed to a more convenient site, and the Club (whose presence in such a building would not be tolerated except by Englishmen) was said to be on the eve of departure to Maymyo beyond the hills.)

This morning's work was very typical of the limitless energy which resides in the person of Lord

Curzon, and also of his catholic interest in all which concerns the dignity and welfare of those for whom he is responsible. With such a man in their midst the people of Burma, it goes without saying, were not slow to lay before him problems and prayers of greater or lesser magnitude, taking it for granted (for his reputation had preceded him) that he would personally consider their particular requests and decide upon them within the next few days. They knew their man, and were not disappointed in him; their petitions, like those of the people of India, concluded always with a prayer for personal investigation by the Viceroy himself. And this phenomenal power of investigation displayed by the Lord Sahib did not imply mere formal communings with the officials connected with the matter in hand. It was interesting to observe that Lord Curzon was accessible to everybody who had anything of importance to tell him, whether of high or low degree. This was happening every day on tour: he visited no temple without the local expert upon its history; entered no palace without an architect and an antiquary at his side. He questioned the priests and the students, catechised the athletes, conversed with merchants and missionaries, and derived from them all a mass of valuable information in a single morning which no amount of stereotyped communication or stately palaver with Government officers could have extracted.

The afternoon and evening of the day whose

proceedings I am describing were passed in social functions arranged by the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma, Sir Frederick Fryer. On the following morning, after a second visit to the palace, an expedition of a very different kind was made to Father Wehniger's[1] Leper Asylum on the outskirts of Mandalay. A visit to such an institution as this—the home of a sickness which staggers humanity in every sense—is in vivid contrast, by reason of its pathos, to the other life of careless enjoyment which is associated with the general notion of Burmese existence. It is indeed a noble work of urgent necessity, to combat the foul and fell disease which scourges Burma from North to South; and it is, moreover, a monument to the genius of the Roman Catholic missionary system in foreign lands. In the suburbs of Mandalay it stands, this mausoleum dedicated to an incurable disease, a fine red brick building with its male and female wards, its house for the priesthood and nursing sisters, its splendid chapel. It is tenanted by scores of poor lepers maimed and disfigured, who are tended and housed by the philanthropy of Europe and America, thanks to the interest aroused in the Asylum by the efforts of Father Wehniger and his colleagues. The *personnel* consists of some twenty missionary priests—a few of them expert doctors—of all nationalities, and some nursing sisters, among whom I noticed Americans and Canadians. Yes, here are Father Damiens by the

[1] This great Christian gentleman died in Burma in 1903.

dozen, fighting for the lives of their poorer brethren with one hand, and for their own lives with the other; yet barely known to the outer world for the heroes and heroines that they are. To this sacred work their souls and bodies are consecrated: year in, year out, they live in this unhealthy fever-ridden country—ministering angels of goodness to all around them; and, when they can be prevailed upon to go for a holiday to some healthier climate in Asia or Europe, they spend the larger part of their time preaching and collecting funds for the further prosecution of their labour of mercy and loving-kindness. I need not say with what words of warm encouragement the Viceroy addressed this brave band of saints, after closely investigating all of the sad conditions under which they are proud to work. From beginning to end the scene was heartrending at nearly every point of view. Yet there was happiness, perhaps where it was most required—namely, on the faces of the poor sufferers themselves, and even in the movements of a band of small children whom the nurses had dressed up with paper caps and toy guns as little soldiers. To a playful salute from these, and with the sound of "God save the King" issuing from their stricken lips, the brilliant cortège moved out of the shadow back into the sunshine of life.

XXIII

DURBAR

THERE are many explanations to be given in solution of the problem which perplexes our friends abroad: why is it that Great Britain succeeds in colonising lands and in governing races where other nations so often fail? And, without setting out the answers in detail, I may mention one which was prominently brought into mind by the picturesque ceremony of the Mandalay Durbar. It is no doubt a principle of our Government in distant lands to alter as little as possible the manners and customs of the people over whom we are set; indeed, we lay great store by the preservation of all native forms and ceremonies which are consistent with the practices of civilisation and conducive to the maintenance of order. Highly expedient, too, is the system which in such matters of ritual lacks rigidity; its elasticity is its greatest safeguard. For, in point of fact, it matters very little whether the native salute is effected by the European bow, the Indian salaam, the Chinese kow-tow, or the other gestures by which Maori or Red Indian or Zulu indicate respect: the essential is that the subordinate shall understand that the reverence due

erstwhile from him to his native ruler is now due to his Overlord; he may then exhibit in his own way his comprehension of that fact.

I have seen this act of obeisance performed in many ways and in many lands, but a Durbar is to me the most impressive and significant of all. Nowhere else have I seen quite such a ceremony, in which the status of the ruler and the ruled is so clearly differentiated, and in which the main attributes of personal sovereignty are so surely made manifest. In the course of the proceedings the representative of the Sovereign receives homage, confers honours, bestows praise or blame, and, in his speech, decides upon some questions and advises upon others with all the authority of an Eastern Dictator backed by the support of a Western Democracy. Such then was the inward significance of this capital red-letter day in the annals of Burma, and it will be readily imagined that in Lord Curzon's hands the reception in Durbar of the fealty of native rulers lost nothing of its regality, was robbed of nothing of the ritual which symbolised its meaning.

In the cool of the afternoon the Durbar Hall was filled, natives and Europeans anxiously awaiting the advent of the Viceroy. Amid the lofty columns of red and gold sit the rulers of the Southern Shan States, the former Ministers of the Burmese Court, the European officials, the native soldiery. The central aisle is decorated with scarlet, and at its end, upon a daïs, is set

the crystal chair. As the hour approaches, the General of the District, accompanied by his staff, proceeds to his place; shortly after him the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma is escorted to his special chair near the Viceroy. A lull follows; then, through the silence, the guns boom out the royal salute; in the distance a fanfare of trumpets is heard; bands on the route take up the strain of "God save the King;"—"Present arms!"—and the Royal Fusiliers obey with a rattle. Down thunders the Lancer escort, guarding a State carriage drawn by magnificent grey horses, and attended by native servants in scarlet and gold. The Viceroy steps out, in full-dress uniform of gold and blue, with the collars and stars of his various orders. Preceded by a full staff of officers civil and military, he marches slowly to the platform, Europeans bowing upon the left hand, and natives bending low upon the right. There, exalted and alone, he sits upon the crystal throne and signifies his assent that the proceedings shall now begin.

Durbar is then opened by the Foreign Secretary in a set phrase, and the ceremony has commenced. There are orders to be presented, titles to be bestowed, honours to be conferred; and as each recipient of Viceregal favour steps forward to receive his reward, his merits are read out in a clear voice to the assembled throng. For his untiring efforts in the cause of the lepers, Father Wehniger is to receive an Indian Order: a small,

cheery little man, modestly attired in a black cassock, advances, is decorated, and disappears. Shan chiefs follow — men who have assisted Government in various ways by punishing murderers or stopping marauding, by educating their people or otherwise promoting their welfare. They are variously rewarded by receiving titles or emblems of higher office, such as golden chains, silver swords, or large gold medallions hung round their necks on a scarlet ribbon by the Viceroy himself. Rather uncomfortable these worthies look as their merits are recited to the public with a frankness which leaves nothing to be desired. The following is a specimen of the language employed :—

"For the title of Thaye Gaung Ngwe Da Ya Min (The Silver Sword): Maung Kyaing, Secretary of Public Works, Minister of Hsipaw State, is a very intelligent and energetic official, who has done much to improve the state of communications in Hsipaw. He has taught himself the use of surveying instruments, and has personally aligned and carried out all the more difficult roads in the State. He has shown much tact in the management of men."

However, they live through it, nervously advance to the Viceroy to be decorated and to make obeisance, then gracefully retire to their companions in the body of the hall. Next come the native civil servants and Burmese soldiers whose gallantry has won public notice. Presentations of all the chiefs follow, and of the

officers of mounted infantry and police. These are natives of India, and go through the beautiful ceremony of presenting the hilt of a half-drawn sword for the Viceroy to touch, as a sign that their service is at his command. To see Lord Curzon perform this particular office made one proud to be English. The stern impassivity of his countenance, the straight, honest glance that shot from the eyes of the fearless statesman into those of the fearless Sikh soldier who returned it, the dignity of the touch of the proffered sword-hilt, conveyed a world of history and of forecast.

Then followed the speech from the Throne, read from a printed paper by the Viceroy, and subsequently translated into Burmese by a native interpreter, crouching on the lowest step of the daïs. At its conclusion there was a general clapping of hands, a form of expression of approval common in Burma, but not general throughout the East, and the Durbar was closed.

The procession re-formed; the Fusiliers presented arms; the Viceroy drove away alone; the escort thundered after him; the guns fired the royal salute; and the chiefs, greatly impressed, departed on their long pilgrimages to their distant homes, buoyed with the assurance contained in the speech that—"though you live on the farthest frontier of Empire, your King-Emperor will never forsake you."

Thus closed the great Durbar, at which the civil and military authorities stood face to face

with their acknowledged Lord. But the Viceroy was still anxious to know something personally of the priesthood, for whose work he had already made known his respect and solicitude. This desire on his part was fully appreciated by all classes of the native community, whose pleasure was heightened when they learned that, by Lord Curzon's wish, it was proposed to convene a meeting of the poonghis, at which the Civil Chief of the State might discuss with them certain delicate and difficult questions concerning their status, their headship, and their civil authority. For years past these questions had been shirked or shelved; the Archbishop had not been ratified in his election by Government, so his authority had proportionately waned, and the instruction of Young Burma had suffered accordingly. With characteristic energy Lord Curzon determined to tackle these questions and thrash them out with the leaders of the people in audience assembled. The news spread abroad; a general convocation of the hierarchy! Such a thing had never been heard of before, and great curiosity as to the result of the gathering was immediately aroused.

No spot could have been more appropriate or beautiful than that selected for the audience. A mile outside Mandalay, at the foot of the mountains, stand the famous 450 pagodas, a limitless collection of gleaming white spires, beneath each of which is inscribed a Table of the Law. In the midst of these rises a golden



THE "FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY" PAGODAS AT MANDALAY

dome, and this was the site of the meeting. Seated in a vast semicircle, their backs to the glittering fane, were 2000 holy men assembled, their pale-bronze faces, deep amber robes, broad lemon-coloured fans lighted by the radiance of the declining sun, which burnished this golden scene and gilded the shrines and the sky above the far blue hills.

Towards the centre of this conference, down a broad stone causeway, advanced the Viceroy with his staff and the elders of the city. Beneath a marble archway, richly carved and decorated, the procession halted and formed round its central figure. The scene was intensely interesting; the significance of the moment was appreciated to the full. Silence reigned; no sound escaped from the immense gathering which spread like a sea of topaz before Lord Curzon's eyes. Fully sensible, no doubt, of the danger of even appearing to dictate to the rulers in this ancient faith, the words of the Viceroy's speech were a model of dignity and deference. Slowly proceeding, for phrase by phrase his speech was translated into Burmese, he argued the merits of the several questions submitted, showing a grasp and a knowledge of them which delighted his hearers. To some of their petitions he agreed, from others dissented, but in all displayed a fairness and a decision which powerfully affected the Oriental mind. At the conclusion of his remarks the Viceroy invited answers to certain of his questions from the leaders of the

poonghis, which led to an interesting discussion, serious, humorous, animated, that lasted until the sun had set upon this wondrous scene.

Then slowly the carriage rolled away, down an avenue of orange robes that could not gain admission to the conclave. From behind and among the countless shrines issued streams innumerable of silent saffron; they seemed to pour down every road, to pass over every bridge, a glittering pageant of the mediæval past, until the short twilight faded and darkness covered the windings of that Golden Flood.

XXIV

ON THE FRONTIER OF THE EMPIRE

LASHIO

To those for whom travel in cities and populous places has comparatively little charm, there is something infinitely attractive in the novelty of untrodden paths that lead to the very outposts of our Empire. And for Lord Curzon, whose life-work has been largely devoted to the study of our frontiers, it was especially congenial, after all the pomp and parade of Mandalay, to travel off in something less than semi-state to acquaint himself on the spot with the problems of the Indo-Chinese frontier, and to come into personal contact with the British officials who advise the tribal chiefs in those remote regions. There are not so many people nowadays (for "we are all Imperialists now") who care to remember the searchings of heart that followed the annexation of Upper Burma twenty years ago; the doubts of those who questioned the wisdom of extending our Imperial trust; the murmurings of the faint-hearted who asserted that the white man's burden was already too great. "How can we," it was argued, "with so small a force at our command, control effectively a region co-terminous with the vast and

unexplored Chinese West, inhabited by wild and uncivilised tribes; and, if we can hold it, will the outlay be remunerative?" With time the answer has come, and it is satisfactory. The Shan States have, since that time, enjoyed a period of peace and of just government previously unknown; progress is visible on every side, in the repression by the chiefs themselves of murder and marauding within their boundaries, in the opening up of roads and other channels of communication, in education, and in the prosecution of the arts of peace. It was to see for himself this complete vindication of Lord Dufferin's policy that Lord Curzon arranged to visit Lashio, the capital of the country of the Northern Shans; and also to give those far-off princes the coveted opportunity of receiving the representative of the King-Emperor.

From Mandalay, to Lashio is a distance of about 180 miles, and the journey is one of more than ordinary interest. The first stage consists in climbing the heights behind Mandalay by means of a zig-zag railway, reversing stations, and other mountaineering appliances, until the plateau is reached. There stands Maymyo, the summer seat of the Burmese Government, well watered, and surrounded with richly wooded hills. Upon one of these Government House is situated, a large and comfortable châlet, where poinsettias flourish and strawberries abound on the first of December! There used to be a considerable



THE GOKTEIK BRIDGE

amount of sport in this neighbourhood, but the recent plantation of native soldiery upon the plateau is said to account for the surprising absence of anything like game at the present time.

From Maymyo, down to the Gokteik Gorge, the railway leads through broad tracts of uninhabited country of unsurpassed loveliness. The luxuriant growth of the jungle, the abounding forests of teak backed by high hills covered and crested with feathery bamboo, the variety of butterflies and birds, the isolated villages and deserted pagodas, are but a few of the enchantments that fascinate the wayfarer's eye. At Gokteik we reach the wonderful gorge which runs some two hundred miles east and west, the same "gold and silver road" along which Marco Polo accompanied the invading armies of China on their march to Mandalay. In former years there was a very considerable traffic upon it, but latterly the constantly disturbed political condition of the districts through which it passes has led to the diversion of much of the trade to other channels. This state of things, however, is rapidly improving, and hopes are confidently held out by the sanguine that trade will return, now that the gorge is bridged and there is swift and direct communication between Mandalay and the Chinese frontier. The gorge is spanned, in the first instance, by a natural bridge standing some five hundred feet above the bed of the river, which has tunnelled for itself a passage through the rock. Upon this

base the Pennsylvania Steel Company has raised a magnificent steel viaduct, light and graceful in design. From the top of the bridge there is a splendid view down to the river-bed eight hundred feet beneath us, and far up and down the valley; whilst upon either side of the gorge the grandest foliage covers the hills that overhang it. Once over the bridge the railway runs east to Lashio, following for some distance the line of the old Chinese road. Then, leaving the road, it pursues the course of a beautiful river, fed at one point by a magnificent tributary waterfall, which descends through dense tropical foliage, a fall of some two hundred and fifty feet, broken into four tiers of water containing five separate cascades each. This was universally admired by the party, and was generally declared to hold its own with any scenery in the world.

And so the journey continued until suddenly we stopped; not because we had arrived at any particular place or station, but because there were no more rails. A few log huts denoted human habitation in normal times, and they called the spot Manpwè. But upon the present occasion there was no lack of vitality in the neighbourhood. A stalwart escort of native cavalry, some forty ponies, eighty pack mules, and a dozen ox-waggons awaited the arrival of the train; and as soon as it came to a standstill the scene became one of the liveliest animation. As the train-load of some hundred souls stepped out,

there rushed simultaneously a hundred coolies toward the baggage waggons. The luggage was piled on the ground, according to owners, and was then strapped in loads of 120 lbs. on to wooden trestles which exactly fitted the backs of the mules. This done, the trestle was saddled on to each mule in a moment, and off he trotted with a pig-tailed Chinaman or an umbrella-hatted Shan in attendance.

Previously, however, the Viceregal party had mounted their ponies, and with the escort in front and rear marched off into the jungle along a splendid road made for the occasion. It was about a twelve mile ride, through lovely scenery of wood and mountain, and we were almost sorry to debouch on to the plateau where stands Lashio. Here triumphal arches were erected; decorated fences edged our path; covered corridors of plaited palm leaves had been built to honour the great guest. On either side of the road the natives of Lashio were squatting and gazing with enormous interest; whilst, just before entering the Superintendent's compound, there was grouped a knot of the Shan chiefs in whose honour the visit was paid. These chiefs are not picturesque to look at. Situated as they are on the confines of China, it is not remarkable that in feature they should bear strong traces of the Mongol type. Their costume was entirely white, from the snowy fillet twisted in amongst the hair and ending in two tails which stick up like a

rabbit's ears, to the jacket and the long petticoat. Several of them, however, wore Chinese dresses; one was a splendid old man who was half a "Wa"—that is, a member of an aboriginal tribe of head-hunters who live forty miles from Lashio, and harry alternately the Chinese and the Burmese frontiers; another, tall, old, and nearly blind, whose green silk coat, red trousers, and purple velvet boots lent a valuable note of colour to the assembly.

The following morning things were early astir. The compound of the Residency was besieged by retainers of the various distinguished personages now assembled in Lashio, anxious to know at what time their masters could be received, anxious also to disburden themselves of the various gifts which they had been charged to deliver into the safe keeping of some one connected with the Viceregal suite. Soon after sunrise the approach to the Superintendent's abode presented the appearance of a fancy bazaar in some Eastern town, with natives loitering on either side of the pathway, holding in their hands some specimen of native handicraft—embroidery, silk, carving—or endeavouring to restrain the activity of some species of live-stock, notably peacocks, which were sent ahead as external testimony of the loyalty of the donors. My particular care was a small black bear, which subsequently accompanied the party down the Irrawaddy to Rangoon and became a general favourite, until it had the misfortune

to bite the Viceroy's finger instead of the banana with which he was tempting it. When all these offerings had been duly disposed of—they constituted a considerable addition to our baggage on the return journey—two or three of us wandered out with guns over the scrub and thorn toward the mountains of China, in search of partridges and other game which we had been told was plentiful. It proved, however, a fruitless journey so far as game was concerned; and, after toiling for about three hours in the broiling sun, we returned to camp with only two or three brace to our credit.

In the afternoon the regulation Durbar was held in a *Pandal*, or open hall, temporarily erected. It was attended by all the chiefs and native residents, as well as by the half-dozen Europeans who live in that distant part of the Empire. I have already described the ceremonies and proceedings of a Durbar, which do not vary. In this instance, the only salient features were the arrival of the Viceroy, seated on a white pony and shaded by eight white umbrellas of State, and the obeisance of the two old princes (already referred to as living on the Chinese frontier) who, dressed in gorgeous Chinese apparel, solemnly performed the Kow-tow with meaning and much dignity.

Towards evening some of us strolled down to the encampments of the Shan chiefs, who had come, from great distances many of them, to do

homage to their guest. Each of these magnates had a spacious compound allotted to him, within which cabins of various descriptions had been erected for his retainers around the central hut in which the Prince himself resided. Each brought his family and his private band! It was curious to reflect that but a very few years ago any one of these noblemen would have made short work of any white man venturing to intrude into his neighbourhood; yet, so greatly had circumstances and dispositions changed for the better, we were invited to pay friendly calls on each of them, and to drink their tea and smoke their cheroots, whilst chamber music of no ordinary kind was performed for our especial benefit. And thus, in a spirit of perfect amity, a memorable excursion was concluded. Once again I was thrilled by the evidences of the work of an handful of Englishmen living on the outside edge of the Empire and striving with all their might, yet quietly and unobtrusively, for the welfare of Burma and Britain. In places such as this, as in the Khyber or at Chaman, there is a deep significance and a true emotion felt when we lift our glasses for the first and only after-dinner toast, "The King-Emperor."

MYITKYINA

At this point it will be advisable, for the sake of geographical convenience, to take leave of the Viceregal party in order to visit a part of Upper Burma, still further north, which time alone forbade Lord Curzon to see. Fortunately, during a subsequent stay in Burma, I was able to arrange to go there, and to learn something of the grand scenery and luxuriant country through which the railroad runs from Sagaing (across the Irrawaddy) to the terminus of the Upper Burma system, some seven hundred miles due north of Rangoon. We took the best part of two days getting to Myitkyina, in a slow, dirty, and quite uncomfortable train; but the constantly changing beauties of the landscape, the ever varying conditions of life, and the fascinating variety of tribes (whose features and costumes and weapons harmonised strangely with the modern locomotives that harry the quietude of their territory) were a source of never-failing interest. At length, only a few hours late, we reached our destination in the darkness, and rode by unknown paths from the station to the Commissioner's residence. Once more we were sleeping in an outpost of the Empire, this time at the door of the great unadministered territory within whose mysterious confines rise the waters of the Irrawaddy that flows swiftly past our quarters. Myitkyina ("near the Great River") is a typical specimen of rough

and ready civilisation on a British frontier. Twenty years ago it did not exist, except as a Shan village under the nominal protection of the Chinpaws, whom the Burmans and ourselves call Kachins. But, in process of pacifying the country after the annexation of Upper Burma, it became necessary to create a centre of administration for the vast district north of Bhamo, extending to the jade mines in the west and the "unadministered territory" in the north; so Myitkyina was chosen as being both healthy and easy of access by land or water. It lies just outside the pale of the tropics, on the banks of the river, about thirty miles from the confluence of the N'maikha and M'likha, whose joint waters are called the Irrawaddy, and it is now the most agreeable station in Burma. But, politically, it is perhaps the most difficult of all districts to administer, in a land where all frontier administrations are delicate and responsible, since the Kachins (though invariably worsted by us in the fight) are a warlike and intractable race. Blockhouses are, therefore, erected to protect the town from sudden raids; and a very strong force of military police, numbering over two thousand men with nine British officers, is quartered at Myitkyina. Within that imaginary ring fence (for the barbed wire entanglements are kept stored against the day of emergency, and are not left standing on account of the cattle and horses that graze upon the plain) all is smiling and contented. In that



A KACHIN WOMAN



A SHAN GIRL

delicious climate, and in the month of December too, roses are blooming in midsummer profusion; the orange-trees are heavy with fruit, peach-trees are in blossom, strawberries and violets are upon the table. And in the bazaars the prospect is no less peaceful, for the lion and the lamb can now lie down together; the Burman and the Shan, the Panthay, the Kachin, and the native of India buy and sell and swindle like a party of old friends. Here is the "pax Britannica" in the concrete; but the region of unrest is near at hand.

The "unadministered territory" is an enormous tract of country whose square mileage I should hesitate to name. Through the confluence of the rivers a line is drawn from east to west, from Assam to China, and north of that the region is known as "no man's land," although it very definitely belongs to the Kachins. In a northerly direction it extends at least two hundred miles to the frontiers of Tibet, absolutely unknown, unexplored, wild Kachin territory, whose inhabitants acknowledge no authority but that of the chiefs of their clans, and respect no laws save the primitive rules and duties of revenge. Vendetta is the one principle to which the untutored Kachin scrupulously adheres, and it is responsible for most of the raids and outrages upon British territory. When an old Kachin is at death's door, he gathers his family around him and solemnly recites to them the injuries which he and his forefathers

have suffered at the hands of others; he announces those which he has had time to wipe out in blood, and those which he must now bequeath unavenged to the loyalty of succeeding generations. His sons and daughters swear to repay the "debts of honour" thus owing; and when the old man is dead, and has been buried with his native panoply around him, they proceed to dig a circular trench round his grave; but the circle is not completed until the father's name is clear. In performing these acts of filial duty horrible murders are sometimes committed, and vengeance is occasionally wreaked upon unoffending heads. Some months ago a wild Kachin, who had lodged for many weeks with a Chinaman near Myitkyina, suddenly rose one night and murdered his host and his wife and their four children. When he was arrested he admitted his guilt gladly, and explained that he had no option, since his father had been killed by a Chinaman years before, and the innocent must sometimes suffer for the guilty.

For many years it has been the British policy to keep this unadministered territory at arm's length, and to adopt an attitude of armed neutrality toward the unruly Kachin. But raids and consequent reprisals continued, and relations were anything but satisfactory, so the late Lieutenant-Governor of Burma (Sir Hugh Barnes) devised what all must hope will prove the better way. Long experience on the North-West Frontier and in the Indian Foreign Office had, I suppose, con-

vinced him that there was an atmosphere more serene than that of veiled hostility, in which the British Raj could live *vis-à-vis* its border neighbours. Fortunately, he had at his hand a Deputy-Commissioner, already in charge of the Myitkyina district, whose inclinations and abilities were wholly suited to his wise purpose, which was to see whether courtesy and confidence could not take the place of suspicion and ill-feeling. Immediately Mr. W. A. Hertz went to work with a will, sending messages of friendship and tokens of peace to some of the chieftains over the border. These were reciprocated, and each returning envoy brought encouraging news of his reception, until the moment seemed propitious to invite these rulers to come into Myitkyina and hold a conference with the representative of Britain. Accordingly, messengers were once more despatched, this time with invitations and pledges of complete immunity from arrest on any score, and bearing to each, as a pledge of protection and safe convoy, one half of a silver rupee whose other half was held by Mr. Hertz. Over one hundred of such invitations were issued, and all but one were accepted. More than that, one conference had already taken place with the chiefs of the N'maikha district, thirty of whom "came in" two months before my visit. They were warmly greeted by our representative, and acclaimed with undisguised delight by the people. For four days they were lodged and feasted and

entertained, and the success of the venture was assured. They witnessed a parade of the troops, and became so enthusiastic when they saw the company of our Kachins march past, that they could scarcely be restrained from joining them. The music of the band also enchanted them as they gazed upon the brass instruments in amazement; but the triumph of all the entertainments was reaped by the gramophone, from which they could not be dragged away!

And so, in a spirit of confidence and great good-fellowship, closed a remarkable visit which may have in it the making of history. For now, upon the walls of Mr. Hertz's library there hang thirty dahs, the native broadswords of these warrior chiefs, each offered as a willing hostage and pledge of friendship and good behaviour in the future. The next district, about the size of England, sent in its representative men on the following Sunday from the Hukong Valley, and a third section was received from the Sanas early in the New Year, 1906. Good news this, and tidings of great joy and of peace on earth effected in the name of Great Britain by one of the quietest of her sons.

XXV

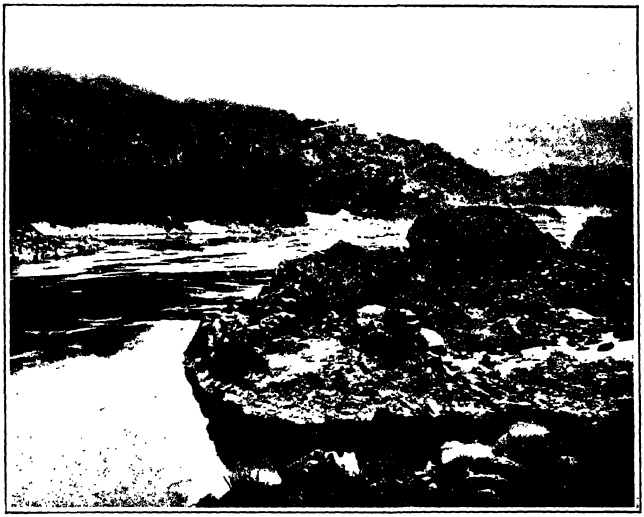
THE "GREAT RIVER"

MYITKYINA TO MANDALAY

I FEEL a curious, but quite unarguable, kind of satisfaction in having at one time or another travelled the whole thousand miles' length of the river Irrawaddy, between Myitkyina and Rangoon. It is, indeed, a noble stream, whose breadth and depth, colour and temper, dangers and charms, vary with such bewildering rapidity that a monotonous journey over any stretch of its waters is an impossible experience. Through the great courtesy of the Department at Mandalay I was given a passage from Myitkyina to Bhamo on a Government launch, and was thus enabled to pass through the famous "first defile," one of the most gorgeous river journeys in the world. It is, however, so dangerous a passage at most times of the year that no other steamers ply on this particular reach, and therefore its beauties are only known to a favoured few. Of course, before starting, I was duly informed of the numerous perils of the voyage that lay before me—this is a conversational failing in every part of the globe—and I was reminded that this was only the second river journey down to Bhamo since

the rains, so all the possibilities of misadventure were not yet exhausted. It was, therefore, with the greater satisfaction that I found myself on the same launch that had borne me up the Chindwin four years before, commanded by the same old native "Seraing" who had piloted me so safely on that occasion.

Early one morning we left Myitkyina, southward bound, and by the pace at which we were travelling we knew that something of the flood current was behind us. All day long the scenery was such that we stood, like men riveted to the deck, watching the glorious panorama of mountain and cliff and wood bathed in the lambent rays of the winter sun. At night we had to tie up to the bank, since the channel is of the very narrowest and can only be pursued during the daytime, and the following day's steaming brought us down as far as the village of Senbo, a picturesque cluster of native dwellings set on the hills a hundred feet above us. In the rainy season the river is at that level, rising thereto sometimes at the rate of fifty feet in a single night. This evening, however, the residents came scrambling down the hill as fast as they could, to enjoy the rare excitement of looking at the white people on the launch. All through the dark hours a sharp watch was kept on the vagaries of the river, which conducted itself with praiseworthy regularity on the whole. Twice only during the night did the banks, to which the steamer was



THE IRRAWADDY: IN THE FIRST DEFILE



THE IRRAWADDY: IN THE SECOND DEFILE

staked, give way and fall into the torrent; but this seemed a commonplace occurrence to the crew, who, with great skill and promptitude, remedied the position before further misfortune could overtake us. At dawn we started on our journey through the first defile, a passage thirty-five miles in length, fraught with every conceivable danger from eddies and whirlpools, shallows and sunken rocks. No prose description is adequate to express the savage grandeur of our surroundings during the next few hours, which I will, therefore, leave to the vivid imaginings of the reader; contenting myself with the confession that our sense of security was considerably enhanced when we had successfully navigated the sinuous channel between the rocks known as the Elephant, Cow, and Granary, at the lower end of the defile. Then we steamed into a beautiful broad expanse of water whose wooded banks melted into the hills, which, in their turn, shaded off into distant mountains. Soon afterwards Bhamo came into view, and there, three or four miles below the town itself, we bade farewell to the *Freebooter*, and transferred our effects on to one of the comfortable steamers belonging to the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company.

There was a full day at our disposal before continuing our journey, and that was spent in exploring the quaint streets of Bhamo, the terminus of the caravan route from Upper Burma into Yunnan. The hills of China seemed scarcely

fifteen miles away; indeed, there was little to forbid us thinking that we were already within the boundaries of the Celestial Empire. It was a long and dusty walk from our vessel to the town, across a dreary waste of sand and rank grass to what must be called the high road. Upon it we found a string of caravans coming wearily in from over the mountains, their first expedition since the roads became passable; hundreds of mules and oxen and ponies, all laden far beyond the point where cruelty begins, and (as it seemed) thousands of people—Shans, Chins, Kachins, Panthays, Chinamen—in one long inextricable tangle of traffic. With these we mingled, a cheery dirty crowd, and eventually gained our objective. Bhamo itself has nothing distinctive about it except its thoroughly Chinese appearance. China Street and the Joss House were the main points of interest, and in these we idled away many an hour watching the world and his wife. One or two of the merchants were especially friendly and invited us into their private dwelling-houses, where we drank tea and smoked with them, whilst they caused furs and fruit and curious ornaments to be brought for our inspection by the smaller dealers in the street. Then they took us to their temple and explained something of its wonders, pointing out the exquisite carvings and enamels which the faithful had brought from their land of origin for its adornment. Only in Amarapura (a village near Man-

dalay worth visiting if only to see its magnificent Chinese temple) have I seen in Burma a joss-house to compare with this one in Bhamo. As in Darjeeling and Delhi and elsewhere, we noticed with regret that the one European shop of any importance was kept by a German, who made a thriving livelihood by a sale of native curios: from him I bought a number of specimens of Shan enamels, of Kachin weapons, and of the costumes worn by the various races on this part of the frontier. And, in the same connection, an exhaustive examination of the foreign goods exposed for sale in the meaner streets proved beyond any doubt that, whereas Belgium and Holland, France and Germany, had managed to push their manufactures thus far into Upper Burma, it was the rarest possible thing to find anything of English make in these bazaars.

So, in the congenial occupation of watching others at work and play, we spent a delightful day in Bhamo, returning in inky darkness to our ship just in time for the evening meal. "Early to bed" was the *ordre du jour*, since we had to be under weigh at sunrise and ready for the glories of the second defile. A passage from "The Silken East" so admirably describes these that I will, once again, call in Mr. O'Connor to my aid:—

"The channel, broader and less obstructed, offers a more adequate highway, and the river

is less turbulent in its entry. Yet on all sides there is grim testimony to its power in the pedestals of the surrounding hills, torn, contorted into the most fantastic patterns, and swept bare of every vestige of life to a height of thirty feet. It is this sense of conflict between vast elemental forces which, felt intensely here, makes the second defile a great spectacle of the world. Near the northern entrance a mighty cliff, which turns its worn face to the river, speaks with eloquence of the conflict. It rises sheer into the sky from the water's edge, eight hundred feet from its massive foundations, made smooth by the constant friction of the speeding river, to the delicate clustering bamboos on its summit. Round its base graceful creepers climb, and hang in festoons amid the branches of noble trees. A pagoda in miniature, one of the smallest of the myriads which taper heavenwards in this land of religion, crowns the top of a small rock at its feet. Its diminutive size throws into relief the great rock, seared with the stress of centuries, which towers majestically above it. An instinctive hush settles down on the ship as we race under its shadow, and there is deep silence in the gorge, broken only by the steady paddle-throbs, which echo through it like mysterious heart-beats."

There is yet the third defile to pass before the Irrawaddy leaves the impetuous paths of early youth and emerges into the more sedate career

of middle life. This defile, however, prepares us for the change; and the calmer beauties of its scenery, albeit jewelled by such incidents as the glorious peak of the Shwè-u-daung, which stands sentry over the ruby mines of Burma, and the perfect little island pagoda of Thihadaw, form an appropriate prologue to the play of history and commerce which concerns the later life of the "Great River" on its broader reaches south of Mandalay.

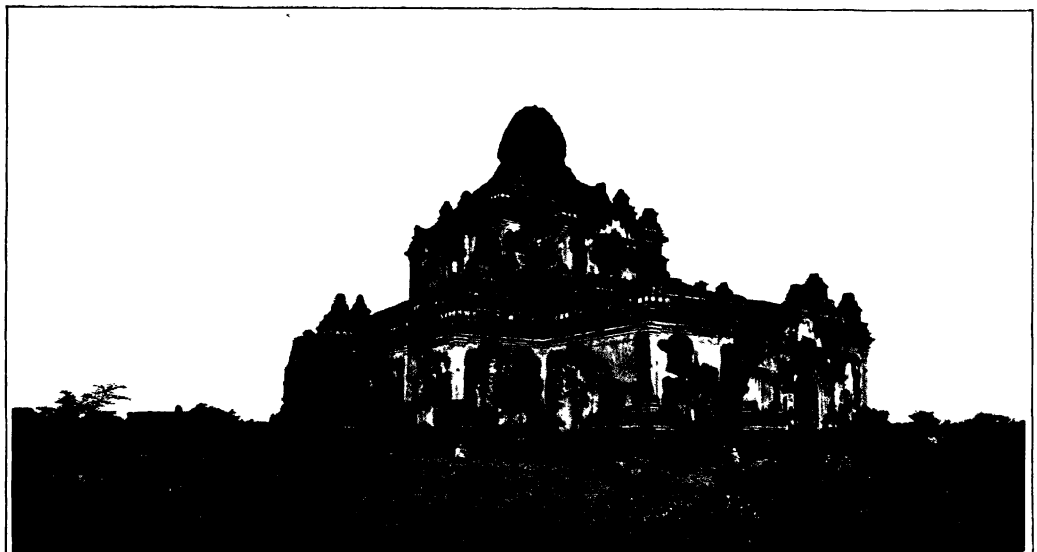
MANDALAY TO PROME

To preserve the continuity of the journey down the Irrawaddy let us now rejoin the Viceroy—whom we left on his return from the Durbar at Lashio—and proceed in silent pageant past all the faded glories of forgotten thrones which throng the banks of the Great River. The journey is a slow one, and far less beautiful than that from the extreme north of Upper Burma; yet there is so much history associated with this particular river route, which has been a closed book to the majority of us who travel through this newly-annexed country, that our time is well spent in poring over the pages of the past in such volumes as "Burma under British Rule, and Before," by Mr. John Nisbet.

It is a curiosity of later Burmese history that each king has been expected to choose for himself a new capital; denuding the city and palace of

his predecessor to enrich and beautify the seat of his own government and residence. Many such capitals, as I have already observed, are passed upon the journey down the Irrawaddy from Mandalay: Sagaing upon the right bank, Ava and Amarapura upon the left; naught remaining of their pristine glories save uninhabited monasteries and dilapidated shrines. It is, indeed, a pathetic progress past these scenes of bygone splendour, with their memories of kingly pageants and of savage torture, now buried in deserted villages with their crumbling monuments of an ancient faith. Still further down the river is Pagàn—the capital of Burma in the ninth century —at that date remarkable for the beauty and extent of its numberless pagodas and secular buildings. Alas, the ravages of time, and of a Chinese army twenty-six millions strong in the thirteenth century, have reduced this famous capital to a city of the dead; like Angkor on the Cambodian frontier, and like Ayothia in Siam, its ruins alone remain to mark its historical existence.

In spite, however, of this melancholy archæological fact, the people from the neighbourhood of Pagàn were anything but dead when the Viceroy's flotilla arrived amongst them. We anchored in the foreground of a brilliant sunset, which lent additional colour to the animated scene upon the river banks. A huge barge of honour, in the likeness of an immense green red and gold



PAGAN: THE TELO MYLO PAGODA

dragon, was brought out to meet the party, and was then towed to land by the semi-nude crews of a dozen dug-outs. Upon the shore was erected the reception hall, decorated and hung with lanterns; the chiefs of the neighbourhood were assembled within, and their daughters and wives, dressed in their best, performed a dance in honour of the illustrious guest. But night was approaching, and a visit had yet to be paid to the great pagodas of Pagàn. Imagine the scene as darkness drew on. A multitude of cheery faces and miles of gay silk clothing lined the road for all its length, and lightened our way with thousands of coloured flares and lanterns. At the head of the procession rode the native escort, and then the Viceroy; following him came Lady Curzon, carried in a great golden chair (once the processional throne of King Theebaw) high upon the shoulders of forty natives, who chanted as they ambled along; and the cavalcade closed with the staff, mounted upon sturdy little Burmese ponies. Most mysterious seemed our journey through the gloom of this unknown city, past monumental remains of forgotten ages looming up in the darkness; palaces and temples bearing mute testimony to the ruling races of long ago. But although our return to the shore, now literally blazing with light from lantern and pier-head and raft and barge, was brilliant beyond compare, yet not even all this illumination could quite dispel the atmosphere of depression that

seemed to enshroud Pagàn, the grand mausoleum of the Irrawaddy.

Soon after sunrise on the following morning we proceeded down the river, halting at Yenanghat to see the oil-fields, whose produce is one of the staple industries of Lower Burma. They are not nearly so large as the Russian fields at Baku and elsewhere, but, nevertheless, for those to whom such mineral experiences were new, the visit proved a most interesting one. Early as was the arrival, the Barge of Honour, the Reception Committee, the inevitable native ballet, were all in position as soon as the Viceroy's boat appeared upon the scene, with its unexpected escort of a large species of junk crowded with clowns and dancers and bands of Burmese music. I shall not attempt any account of this day's proceedings except to notice the bodyguard of native policemen, dressed in khaki, formed out of tribesmen whose prowess as dacoits five years ago was certainly not second to their efficiency in this later line of business. Their chiefs accompanied them upon this occasion, although they had not "taken the shilling"; naked and unshamed they arrived, armed with bows and arrows and long knives, and paid their respects with much native dignity before the vast crowds assembled upon the mountain side.

Our next stop was one to which the party had looked forward for many a long day; it was at Poughlin, the best marsh in Burma for snipe and duck. Half a day was given up to this unalloyed

pleasure; and we shall not readily forget the magic charm of the silent start before sunrise. Each sportsman—we were fifteen—was given a canoe, paddled by two natives sitting in the stern, to get to his position in the "jheel." The distances were great and progress was not rapid; but an hour was well spent in gliding mysteriously between walls of grand overhanging foliage, waking from their slumbers cranes and egrets, storks and kingfishers, that live by the river-bed. Now and then our waterway led into an open lake of considerable size; then, again, we disappeared, to drift down some unexplored side-channel heavy with the mists of morning. All this time the sky was reddening—song birds began to pipe—the sun was rising—day had come. And now the glories of nature were fully visible; birds of all varieties were on the move, butterflies of every brilliant species flitted across our path; the duck upon the water paddled away unfrightened when the plash of the oar reached them; anxiously we all awaited the sound of the signal shot. At last it rang out; land and water seemed to rise with a whirr from the wings of every living thing around. Then the sport began; the shooting was continuous for about three hours and the conditions were excellent. Geese, mallard, teal of many kinds, snipe and waterfowl of all sorts, made up the bag which, besides being the result of a very enjoyable morning, furnished the dinner-table with luxuries of a most gratifying kind.

By four o'clock we were under weigh again, and did not get far before sunset, when, owing to the difficult pilotage of the river, we had to anchor in mid-stream for the night. From this point the Irrawaddy scenery becomes decidedly more attractive, and increases in beauty until Prome is reached. We got there at the ideal hour—just before sunset—and went straight to the Shwè San Daw Pagoda just in time to see something of its wonderful carving and marvellous preservation before sundown. Unfortunately all the population had been cleared away both from the approaches to, and from the platform of, the Pagoda. Result—a lifeless visit to a lovely shrine.

Upon our return to the ship we found merchants in abundance waiting to exhibit specimens of the famous gold lacquer for which Prome is as famous as Pagàn is for lacquer in other colours. The decks gleamed with boxes and tables, plates and trays; whilst captivating little Burmans, squatting on their heels among the wares whose beauty they freely extolled, easily cajoled us into extensive purchases at prices with which they, at any rate, were entirely satisfied.

At nightfall we left Prome by rail, through a forest of torches. The whole length of the line over which we travelled through the night was lighted in this way by villagers standing on either side of the track about twenty yards apart. This

attention had been commandeered by the authorities with a twofold object:—to pay respect to the Viceroy, and to keep the unoccupied and somewhat excitable native out of all chance of mischief.

XXVI

AU REVOIR—

TO RANGOON

THE evening before leaving Rangoon I was the guest at dinner of two of the leading Chinese merchants in that city. We had met on many previous occasions, but had never succeeded in arranging for this festive meal which was to seal our friendship. Not that such an entertainment was, to my mind, in the least necessary for this purpose; but, since they had already showed me such unvarying courtesy, lending me carriages and horses, escorting me hither and thither through otherwise inaccessible parts of Chinatown, I suggested that surely this countersign of amity should properly have been furnished by me. This plan, however, did not at all coincide with their ideas of perfect hospitality, and therefore, upon the aforesaid evening, six of us, three Chinese and three whites, assembled in Mr. ——'s dwelling-house for dinner. The dining-room was ablaze with golden embroideries on scarlet silk backgrounds, with lanterns of grotesque shapes, within which burned electric light, with carved and lacquered furniture whose artistic design and perfect workmanship completed the illusion that we were, for this evening at

least, in far Canton. The following *menu* will show how thoroughly our hosts had entered into the spirit of their resolution to give us a Chinese evening; it does not, however, betray the fact that we were expected to eat with chop-sticks, nor the lamentable story of our shortcomings in that respect.

MENU

Soup

Oyster. Snow Mushroom and Duck.

Fish

Shark's Fin and Fowl. Bêche-de-Mer.
Fishmaw and Duck.

Entrées

Ham and Capon with Vegetables. Steamed Patties.
Duck Webs. Chow-Chow.

Joint

Roast Sucking Pig and Sauce with Steamed Bun.

Sweets

Birds' Nests. Pomegranates. Seaweed Jelly.
Best Souchong Tea.

To this should be added a select choice of wines and liqueurs and the very best of tobacco. It was one of the cheeriest dinners that I ever remember attending, varied by curious little surprises between the courses provided either by the incursions of uninvited guests or by the unexpected attentions of the Chinese servants. After dinner there was a concert provided for our enjoyment, so we proceeded with much ceremony

to the top of the house where music, Burmese and Cantonese, was performed to us as we sat and smoked in the coolth of an illuminated balcony.

TO BASSEIN

The next morning at daybreak I was on board a river steamer, bent on what one may call a "cross-country" journey to Bassein, the head-quarters of the Irrawaddy division of Lower Burma. It is most regrettable to think how many travellers visit Rangoon, yet never undertake this delightful trip which, for certain peculiarities, has its counterpart, I believe, on the Amazon and the Upper Yangtze, but nowhere else in the world. The excursion takes but four days in all, through all the channels and creeks and lanes and by-paths of the Irrawaddy delta, whose gorgeous colouring in tropical foliage and animal life leaves nothing to be imagined. The first twelve hours we passed in blissful contentment, at peace with all the world, and inclined to scorn the word of any who should cast doubts upon the joys of living on the lower reaches of the Irrawaddy.

"Wait till we get to Maubin," said the captain, when some one complained that he thought he had been bitten by a mosquito. So we waited; and about 7 P.M. we reached that favoured spot, which must surely be unrivalled in the universe for the variety and ferocity and quantity of its stinging insects. Long before we had tied up

at the pier-head they had come on board in their millions. They blackened the lamps and the rigging, they swam in our soup and plunged into our tumblers, they battened on our hands and gorged upon our feet, they maddened us with their incessant "ping." The only people on board who took the incursion quietly were a party of French Jesuit priests, returning from their annual conference in Rangoon to pursue their ordinary avocations in the fever-ridden jungles of this neighbourhood. For them, who, to their credit, live year in and year out on rice and black bread, the mosquito had few terrors; they could afford to smile at the full-blooded Briton struggling with this casual adversity. I do not think I smiled once during the hours we spent at Maubin!

A little rest and then we entered the creeks. It was for this that we braved the winged peril through which we had just passed, and would brave it again: to sit in the bow of a river steamer threading its way through these marvellous water-lanes by searchlight. No fairy scene upon a phantom stage was ever more fantastic. The vessel glides silently down a path of silver light under a canopy of foliage from either bank; golden birds and bats fly across our travelling moonbeam, the very moths gleam and glitter in its ray. Utter darkness on either side; here the flickering lamp of a native boat cowering under the shore; there a line of bushes burning with fireflies; in the distance the sound of revels at

midnight. Suddenly the searchlight is swerved to right or left as we bend some anxious corner; immediately the banks are ablaze and the shape of every tree and fern and tiny plant takes on a surprising individuality. The village whence music proceeded is illuminated, to its intense astonishment, with the brilliancy of noontide; and there we see young men and maidens disporting themselves in gay attire. Drawn up beneath the landing stages is a fleet of craft of all sorts and descriptions: huge paddy-boats with carven steering chairs, sanpans, and dug-outs that will not be wanted until the break of day. Till then we, too, are destined to enjoy ourselves in the midst of this unearthly scene; for not until sunrise, when the grey old vulture begins to shake the dew from his wings, and the bands of green parrots start their chattering flight from tree to tree, and the purple kingfisher is seen flitting like an animate jewel among the stones, not until then are we content to turn in and sleep for the few hours that remain before we reach Bassein.

TO MOULMEIN

If Mandalay be King of Burma then Moulmein is his Queen. He sits upon his golden throne, high amid the forest of teak-trees that support his Palace: she is ever happy in her jewelled bower, with the blue mountains of Siam for a setting, and the silver Salween at her feet. From



A POONGHI

a garden of sunny palms towers a golden shrine: of enamel are its walls, brighter than the colours of Limoges; the air dances with rubies and diamonds, and the carpet is of pink roses, mauve orchids, and white lilies. Herein sits Moulmein, Queen of Burma, and accepts the homage which is her due.

How otherwise can I convey the dazzling atmosphere of this Capital of Fairyland—by day and night one unblemished picture of delight. For environment its scenery is without rival; and for artistic charm its inhabitants are unsurpassed. The festivals here set out would prove as hopeless to describe as the splendour of a Benvenuto casket, or the magic of a Perugino landscape. It matters not whether the Viceroy is to visit a district in daylight or at dusk, the feast of beauty is everywhere prepared. At Kado, where stand the sacred buildings, a brilliant throng greeted Lord Curzon in the early morning, grouped beneath the shade of banyan and peepul trees on the banks of the Salween River. Decorated barges, bands of music in native canoes, drifted in the stream; ballets beneath painted pagoda roofs shimmered from the shore; everywhere sunshine and jewels and smiles. So too, when at twilight the State procession moved through the crowded streets of Moulmein, we passed down a lane of lanterns, aided by illumination from every house however humble, and broken only by the blaze of light from triumphal

arches on the route. At the Park, where the reception was held, the brightness was that of day, enhancing the charm of the Dance of Welcome by the daughters of the city, decked out in their fascinating fashions and resplendent in the rarest gems. Here, too, were the industries of Moulmein in working array. By the light of their crude oil lamps the silversmiths chased their delicate designs; the workers in ivory, with cunning awl, turned tusks into treasures; instrument makers fashioned harp and dulcimer; mat weavers toiled at plaited carpets, and the inmates of a blind school showed specimens of their sad labours; hard by a village of Karens, clad in quaint attire, exhibited their antiquated fishing-nets and modes of life. Thus, in an instant, the life of Tenasserim passed before us, beautiful as the landscape which surrounds it; a symphony of industry and peace.

And the last impression of Burma that haunts us, as we raise our anchor on the morrow and look back to Moulmein nestling on the mountain side, is one of matchless beauty. The midday sun lights his beacon for the travellers; and from the golden domes of the far pagodas flash pyramids of fire into the deep blue sky.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

About one quarter of the chapters in this volume have already appeared in the form of magazine and newspaper articles. They have, however, been largely revised and rewritten. I am indebted to the Editors of "The Daily Mail," "The Pall Mall Gazette" and "Magazine," "The Tribune," "The World's Work," and "Vanity Fair" for their kind permission to republish. My thanks are also due to Messrs. Bourne & Shepherd of Calcutta, Lawrie of Lucknow, Herzog & Higgins of Mhow, Del Tufo of Bangalore, Guinder of Kolar, Watts & Skene, and Klier of Rangoon, for allowing me to reproduce specimens of their excellent work as illustrations to this book of travel.

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